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THE GOSPEL A NEW CREATION.

THE language in which the nature and effects of Christianity are frequently described in the New Testament, is not a little remarkable. The Apostles of Jesus knew well and felt deeply the high value of the dispensation, which they were sent forth to publish and defend; and they have accordingly spoken of it in terms proportioned to their conviction of its greatness and importance. They seem to seek industriously for words, that shall fully and worthily embody their conceptions of the worth of their religion. They dwell on this topic with the eloquence of sincerity, and levy contributions on strong metaphorical expressions. It is difficult for us, at the present day, to enter fully into what must have been the state of their minds. To us Christianity comes with none of the effects of novelty. We have grown up amidst its instructions and influences; and its holy light, like the air we breathe, has always surrounded us. We have not passed from another religion to this. It has ever been by our side, with the offer of its guidance, its solace, and support; and perhaps it is because we have never been without it, that we are not impressed, as we should be, with its beauty and excellence. But the case was far otherwise with the first disciples of the Saviour; and the peculiarity of their situation imparted its influence to the language which they used. It is in the spirit of the representations, which they were thus led to make, that Christianity is spoken of as a new creation. 'For,' says St. Paul, 'we are his workmanship, having been created through Christ Jesus unto good works.' In treating of the union of the Jews and Gentiles, Christ is said to have

abolished the enmity, 'in order to create, in himself, of the two, one new man.' Again; 'to be renewed in the spirit of your mind and to put on the new man, which is created according to God in righteousness and true holiness.' 'For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.' And 'if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; (or more properly, "there is a new creation") old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.' Former errors, and imperfect views, and corrupt principles have passed away; the whole religious condition has undergone a change. The figure is one of the boldest and strongest, giving a deep impression of the happy effects of Christianity, a faithful picture of the great work wrought by him, who came forth from God.

Now, as these expressions have been wrested to the support of views, which they were never intended to countenance, and have been pressed into the service of what we deem a false theological system, it is important to bear it constantly in mind, that if we would see them in their proper light, we must interpret them, not according to the principles of any modern sect, or of visionary enthusiasts, but with a sober reference to the circumstances of the time, when these things were said or written. We may frame a meaning for these passages, and then call it the meaning of the sacred writer, forgetting meanwhile that it is nothing but our own invention. This method of interpretation has forced the Scriptures to patronise almost every opinion, and to utter the discordant sounds of Babel. It is finely observed by Jeremy Taylor, that 'men come to the understanding of the Scriptures with preconceptions and ideas of doctrines of their own; and then no wonder that the Scriptures look like pictures, wherein every man in the room believes that they look on him only, and that, wheresoever he stands, or how often soever he changes his position.' He, who reads the Bible, as if it were composed in modern times and under the circumstances of our own age, must always be liable to gross mistakes. We must never forget, that the sacred books, especially the epistles of the New Testament, bear upon every page the impress of the days, when Christianity was first ushered into the world; and without keeping this in view, we shall not have the same ideas and thoughts in our minds, as were in the minds of the sacred authors, when they wrote—the great point, to which it is the object of correct principles of interpretation to conduct us.

What then are the considerations, to which we must look, in order to understand and to justify St. Paul in describing Christianity with such emphatic strength, as to call it 'a new creation,' and



to affirm, that in the case of those, who received it, old things had passed away, all things had become new?

In order to answer this question, we must go back in imagination for a moment, and glance at the time, when every thing with regard to religion was in a far different state, from that which it has assumed since Jesus Christ proclaimed to the world the glad tidings of great joy. No one can trace the history of the moral and religious concerns of the human race, in the spirit of sober, deep and unbiassed reflexion, without feeling at every step, as we come down the path of time, how much the world needs light from heaven, how comparatively poor and inefficient a being man is, with all his pride and all his powers, and how he totters and falls like an infant, if the hand of God be not extended to hold him up. Without undervaluing the efforts of unassisted reason, we must confess they were faltering and imperfect; and the best result of her investigations was but the hope of virtue or the conjecture of philosophy. It is not too much to affirm that the pagan world had scarcely an idea of One Supreme Being; for however their wise men might by continued meditation have caught some glimpses of light, have reached some worthy views on this subject, it is certain that these never penetrated to the body of the people, and even as far as they went, were fluctuating and without effect. All in a manner may be said to have been given up to the fantastic fooleries of superstition and the degrading homage of idolatry. Nature with them was divided into various departments, and a deity placed over each; winds and seas, rivers and groves had their several and distinct gods, and these gods had passions and weaknesses and propensities like the worst and most foolish of their worshippers. The service paid to these imaginary beings corresponded to the character and attributes with which they were supposed to be invested. Nothing like a pure and holy confidence, nothing like trust or hope, could be known to the worshippers of such beings. The mind felt the distressing want of a Being of spotless purity, in whom it might rest and to whom it might flee for refuge; and was cheered by no clear and refreshing conceptions of the character of God, and of the way to his favour and acceptance. With regard to a future life, their views were equally unsatisfactory and wavering. In some cases hope glimmered faintly, and threw a feeble light on the regions of futurity; but to the great body of the people they were certainly regions of utter darkness. There is in man a principle, that so makes him cling to existence, such a dread of sinking into nothingness, such an aspiration after a more improved state of being, than is to be found amidst the agitation and weariness

of this world, that no wonder another world was imagined in futurity, and men sought to satisfy the natural cravings of the soul, by cherishing the anticipation of surviving, in some form, the wreck of death. But amidst the painful uncertainty of their imperfect views on this subject, what was there, on which man, with all his weakness and fears, could depend, as an anchor to the soul sure and steadfast? There was nothing to connect this life with a life to come, nothing that included the grand idea of accountability and recompence, nothing that taught them to regard death merely as a circumstance in their existence. It may easily be supposed that with such notions of religion, they had but a weak foundation, on which to build their morality; for though there is a redeeming spirit in man which, whatever may be his errors on other subjects, seems to preserve sacred, enough of the principles of virtue for many of the purposes of social intercourse, yet morality, without a deeper and stronger support, must be in a great degree inefficacious and superficial. It must have a healthy and vigorous root, or the leaves will wither and the fruit decay. And it cannot be denied, that in the morality of the heathen world, however sublime it may appear in the writings of some of their philosophers, there were wanting clear, simple, and definite rules of duty; and what is more, had these been supplied, there were wanting strong and powerful *sanctions* to enforce them. The consequence was, that the public sense of virtue was weak and blunted, and practices were allowed and even applauded, which can be regarded only with pity or disgust. Such was the imperfection and darkness of the pagan world with regard to three great and essential subjects: the being and character of God; the reality and nature of a future life; and the principles and sanctions of moral duty: topics on which, if on any, it is desirable the human mind should be guided and enlightened.

And with regard to the Jews, we shall find that to them something purer and better was scarcely less necessary, than to the heathens. Whatever of light and truth they had received on religious subjects, was communicated to them in a manner suited to that age and to the character of the people. It was originally adapted to the childhood of the human race. Their views were so low and imperfect, they were so engrossed by the objects of sense, that divine truth could be presented to them only by fragments and in a rude form, surrounded by pomp and ceremony, and bound in by ritual observances, and all the forms which could impress the minds of an ignorant people, unsuspicious of receiving directly higher and purer views. What light they enjoyed soon became darkened; the end of religion was



lost in the means ; the shadow was mistaken for the substance. The waters of Zion were gradually polluted by the impure streams, with which they were mingled. At the time of our Saviour, the law of Jehovah was interwoven with the artificial glosses and designing interpretations of cabalistical ingenuity, and had lost in a great degree its moral influence over the hearts of the people. The way was open for all the impositions of priestcraft, and all the corruptions of a good thing perverted. Thus were the Jews 'weary and heavy laden,' when Jesus appeared to invite them 'to come to him for rest.'

From this hasty view of the state of things before the coming of Christ, we pass to that brighter part of the picture presented by the Gospel. It is almost unnecessary to say, that in the place of all this darkness, Jesus brought light ; that amidst this uncertainty and confusion he appeared to dispel doubt, and to give assurance ; that where there was weakness and woe, he imparted strength and joy ; and that the desert was made to rejoice and blossom as the rose. With regard to the character and perfections of God, Christianity has given the most elevating and consoling instructions. Our attention and worship are not distracted by an indefinite number of weak and idle deities, but our religion teaches us that God is one undivided mind pervading the universe. It is no partial, vengeful, or capricious being, that is brought to our view, but One, whose throne is supported by unfailing goodness, and overshadowed, like the mercy seat of the ark, with the wings of the cherubim of peace ; whose government is one mighty plan for the good of his creatures, and who has arranged the whole universe to do the work of benevolence. This Being sustains towards us the character of a wise and kind father towards his children, and our highest good is the aim of all His dealings, and all His dispensations. We learn that we are the subjects of His moral government, placed here under the tuition of His providence ; and we are taught not to despair nor suffer our confidence to be shaken, though like the timorous disciple we should be called to walk on troubled waters to meet our Lord.—Besides these views of the Almighty, Christianity has placed in the clearest light the all-important doctrine of a future state, and has raised it from an obscure conjecture to a moral certainty. On the surest and best evidence, indeed on the only evidence which can be entirely satisfactory, it has taught us that there is a life beyond the present, and to which the present is introductory ; that the characters we form here shall have a radical influence on our condition hereafter ; that earth points to heaven, and time is linked with eternity. We no longer look on life as the journey

of a day, on the close of which the shades of thick darkness settle fearfully, but as the commencement of a path, which may ever grow brighter and rise higher, as the endless ages move on. Life has a distinct purpose, and is the school in which man is trained and disciplined for immortality.—In addition to this, the preceptive morality of the Gospel is most clear, pure, and simple. Christianity has given perfect rules of duty, provided the foundation of definite and comprehensive principles of action, accompanied by motives the highest and most commanding, and guarded by sanctions most powerfully impressive. It has given virtue a staff to lean upon, without which she might faint by the way. Finally, the Gospel has removed the cumbrous load of Jewish rites and ceremonies, and given us in their place a pure and spiritual religion, the simple directory of the word of truth.

This glance at the great truths of Christianity will serve to intimate the change, which it has introduced into the religion of the world, and to justify the Apostle in calling it a new creation. When we consider, that it has set in motion the springs of spiritual action and energy, that it has diffused new principles of moral life among mankind; that it has proclaimed and established truths of everlasting importance, and of incalculable influence, which before had either been unknown, or known but feebly and uncertainly; which mankind had either lost or disfigured; which had either never found an abode on earth, or had long been vanishing away under forms, and rites, and contrivances to please God without virtue; when we bring into view these considerations, are we not compelled to confess, that there is nothing exaggerated in the language of St. Paul, when he says, 'if any man be in Christ, there is a new creation: old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.' Yes, Christianity was in truth a *new moral creation*; and as at the first creation all was darkness, confusion, and chaos, till the spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and this fair fabric of earth was framed; so in the moral world all was doubt, ignorance, and fear, till Jesus Christ came and spread light, and beauty, and joy, over the whole scene.

Such are the meaning and force of that class of Scriptural expressions now under consideration, and of other kindred expressions so common in the New Testament; and who does not acknowledge that they happily depict the great moral revolution, produced by the Gospel in the highest and most lasting interests of man?

But it may be said, that this is not the whole of the meaning of these passages; that they admit and require a more direct application to the spiritual condition of every one under the



Gospel dispensation. And though this was undoubtedly the original import and bearing of these expressions, yet it is true, they are applicable in an important sense, to individuals at the present day. Christianity still effects a great and striking change on the hearts and lives of many. It is still true, that if any man be 'in Christ,' that is, under the influence of the true spirit of the Gospel, he is altogether a different being from what he would be, were he estranged from Christ. Who has not seen instances of the powerful and happy effects of Christianity, in the transformation of those, who were once stained with every sort of vice? It is true, our religion does not often work in a sudden and violent manner. Much the greater number of those, who manifest its spirit in their lives, have received its influences gradually and silently. It was instilled into their hearts in their earliest days by parents and instructors, and has constantly dwelt there. It has been continually operating upon motives, forming principles, controlling desires, bending the will, and giving a cast and character to actions and conduct; and all this it has done, and is doing, so habitually and regularly, that it is almost unperceived, while busy at its secret work. The seed is first sown: from this the plant gradually develops itself, which from day to day, and from year to year, strikes its roots deeper, and gains strength, and spreads its branches, till it can bear the buffetings of the storm. This is the most happy and useful operation which religion can have, without noise or passion, giving no ecstasy, but calm and constant joy. In persons, whom religion has thus influenced, no manifest change can be observed, and indeed there could be no striking change but for the worse.

But there are cases, in which the effects of Christianity on individuals, produce a very wide and marked difference between their past and present characters; they are made over again, as it were, and receive 'a new heart and a new spirit.' Suppose the case of one, who from early youth has been the slave of vice, and whose heart and mind have been formed and opened under the worst influences; who has grown up, surrounded by profligate and abandoned companions; from whom the fear of God and the sense of His presence are gone; who finds pleasure in the dark and downward path of vice, and has silenced conscience so often, that she at last scarcely speaks; and who has devoted himself to a diseased and raging appetite, for what is sensual and polluting. Now let this unhappy man, in some favourable moment, and by some powerful means, be awakened to a sense of his own character, and of the dreadful consequences, to which such a character will inevitably lead.

Suppose an arrow from the quiver of divine truth to have reached his heart, and he becomes sensible that he is a wanderer from God and heaven. Christianity comes in and sets before him the high and holy requisitions of God's law, and tells him of the justice of the law-giver. She brings to his view the penalty which God has annexed to sin, and from which there is no dispensation. She touches the springs, which direct the energy of conscience, and this monitor within rises in her strength, and sets before him the record of his past life, stained and darkened with guilt of thought, word, and deed. But he is not left without help or hope. The same religion, which roused him to a sense of his situation, presents him with the remedy for sin. There is balm in Gilead for the wounded spirit, embittered with the consciousness of transgression, and anxious to know if pardon may be obtained. Christianity bids the penitent look up with blissful hope; for she tells him, that when the sorrowing prodigal returned, his father went out to meet him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. If his mind returns to these views, dwells, and meditates upon them, he will probably be subdued to a penitent learner at the feet of Jesus, with the humble question, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' The happy influences of Christianity begin to descend on his soul; he abandons his profligate companions, renounces his darling sins, and places himself under the high and holy discipline of the spirit of the Gospel. Now compare this man, in his present state, with what he was, and you may truly say, he is 'a new creature;' he has new motives, new hopes, new views, new feelings, and his thoughts, wishes, and inclinations are in a new world. He has passed through a moral change from an impure heart to a pure one, from a bad to a good life. Of him it may truly be said, that 'old things are passed away, and all things are become new.'

Observe the man, whose days are spent in the pursuit of those airy trifles, which amuse and employ the sons of pleasure, who passes life without an object, or with one that deserves not the name, who though he is not given to depravity, is absorbed in folly, and who suffers the faculties and the strength of the immortal mind to be dissipated in vain, or worse than vain, occupations. If one, who has thus sunk days and years, of which he can give no account, and weakened and degraded his soul, be arrested by the thought of better and purer things, if considerations of religion dwell long enough in his mind, to arouse him to the remembrance of what he has been, and the conviction of what he ought to be, if in short by whatever means he is excited to look at himself in that mirror, which the



Gospel presents, and can retain the view long enough to make it efficacious, how marked will be the change produced by the spirit of Christianity! The religion of Jesus will teach him to lay aside all his follies and trifles, his vain or vicious pursuits, and live like a being destined for immortality. Life then acquires a serious and weighty purpose, even the purpose of preparation for an endless existence. He, who had been a child of pleasure, becomes a child of God; he employs himself with strenuous diligence in every exertion of moral duty, and goes forth to the events and trials of life, with a heart prepared and willing to be disciplined by the providence of God, and braced by the resources of faith and hope. His days are no longer wasted on airy, unsubstantial pursuits, but in imitation of our great model, are spent in doing good. He becomes sensible, that he has a great task to perform, and therefore he works while the day lasts, knowing that the night cometh, when no man can work. Now, when you consider, what a different being this man has become, how thoroughly the state of his affections, his hopes, his pursuits, the objects of his earnest interest, are altered, you must acknowledge that here is another instance of great moral change, in short of the 'new creation' effected by the Gospel.

But it is unnecessary to enumerate instances. Wherever are to be found the monuments of the reforming and purifying power of Christianity, wherever our religion has converted the sinner from the error of his ways, wherever it has sealed the lips of profaneness, called the intemperate to virtuous sobriety, turned the scoffer into the humble and devout worshipper, wherever it has brought men away from the follies and vanities of earth, and taught them to feel that they are made for eternity, and must act for eternity; wherever it has led sinners away from the false refuges of the world, and taught them to seek the 'building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;' in all such cases, the strong and emphatic expressions of St. Paul, which have been already quoted, may be applied without the fear of presenting an overcharged picture to the mind.

The preceding remarks are intended briefly to illustrate what is meant by the 'new creation,' effected by the Gospel of Christ. By many they will doubtless be considered as defective, because they do not suit the dimensions of their system. It is not wonderful, that those, who think themselves authorized to assume as a position, that man comes into the world totally depraved, and that before he can hope for heaven, his nature must be displaced and a new one induced, should apply the class of expressions, upon which we have dwelt, to the support of their peculiar views. In order to become a 'new creature,' in the

Gospel sense, they deem it necessary for one to become in some very peculiar and striking manner, and perhaps by a special interposition, the receptacle of the influences of the Holy Spirit, a phrase, which is interpreted of course in conformity with the doctrinal views of those who use it. The reality of these influences, when properly explained, no Christian will be disposed to deny. But the features of the true Christian regeneration have, it is conceived, been described in the foregoing observations on the moral revolution produced by the spirit and principles of the Gospel. Unitarians have too easily suffered those, who are called orthodox, to appropriate to themselves *the good words* in religion, and have thus perhaps relinquished to the cause of error something at least of that attachment and reverence, which in many minds are connected with these words. The term *regeneration* is doubtless understood by the greater part of those, who use it currently, to signify in fact nothing else, than we should allow that it expresses truly and forcibly. Theological systems are too often built upon words, more than upon ideas; and those, who use certain phrases, are therefore supposed to belong to the sect with which those phrases have become technical. Regeneration does not mean, nor is it probably after all generally imagined to mean, the destruction of man's nature, but the destruction of his vices, not the taking away something with which he was born, and substituting something else in its place, but the removal of his sinful habits, and superinducing upon his moral powers and affections the true Christian spirit and character. It is not to be supposed, that the laws which regulate the operations of the human mind in other departments, are changed the moment it becomes the subject of religious influences. With regard to religion, as well as other objects, permanent taste, and feelings, and character are not to be suddenly acquired. There must be a patient and industrious use of means. Principles, and sentiments, and motives must be presented often and strongly, must be familiarised and brought home to the soul by frequent meditation and undistracted reflexion, before they can wind their way into the heart, so as to dwell there efficaciously, and send out their influences on the life and conduct. The achievement of the Christian character is not the result of a single effort. Heaven is not to be won by the agonies of a day, nor the happiness of eternity purchased by the emotions of an hour. Religion most surely is not a thing, which comes upon us at once, like a storm, and then passes off, leaving the mind that had been subject to it, in a state of weakness or passion. It must be seen in the whole course and aspect of life; and in just the same degree as it prepares us for



heaven, it will make us better friends, better neighbours, and better members of society. That form of religion, which grows out of violent agitations, does but too often afford nutriment to the stern and unsparing passions; but 'the fruit of the spirit,' to use the beautiful language of Scripture, 'is love, joy, and peace.' It has been forcibly observed, that\* 'the pestilent heat of fanaticism raises an inflammation and a tumour in the mind, whose symptoms are an obdurate rigour and impatience under the probe. The heaven-struck heart is affected like the purer metals, which easily soften and run speedily at the touch of the ethereal ray, but the fanatick spirit, self-heated by its own fiery nature, retains the property of its congenial earth, which grows harder and more intractable, as it burns.'

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ON THE BEST MEANS TO BE EMPLOYED FOR THE SUPPRESSION  
OF INTEMPERANCE.

THERE seems to be an impression prevailing among many who have always manifested much zeal and interest in the promotion of the moral amendment and improvement of society, that the measures, which have been taken for lessening the vice of intemperance have proved abortive, that little or nothing has been effected by them, that habits of this kind, not only, have not been checked, but have even gone on increasing, and that the evil has proved itself to be one of those under which we are obliged to submit as inevitable, since we cannot find for it any sufficient remedy.

If things are so, the prospect is truly melancholy and discouraging. If indeed, all that the more intelligent and moral part of society can do, has proved entirely in vain, if the efforts which have been made, have failed even to check the onward progress of this vice, if nothing can be devised to reach the causes that have created, and still perpetuate this widely spreading malady; we may almost despair of any efforts to improve the moral condition of mankind. But we hope better things. Have the efforts which have been made, proved so entirely unavailing? Has all influence been exerted in vain? How is this known? How can it be known? The causes which induce to intemperance continue to operate, and therefore the vice should, from their natural operation, continue to increase, unless checked by some countervailing causes. Has it so gone on

\* Warburton's Doctrine of Grace, B. 2. Ch. X.

increasing? Has it continued to spread its infection more and more widely, with the rapidity it once did? If it has not; if, although not stayed, it has been retarded in its progress; if it shows even any tendency to become stationary, we are not wholly to despair. If the evil, though still progressing, has gone on in its progress more slowly than before our attempts to arrest it, we have a right to flatter ourselves that this is, in some measure, owing to our efforts, and even this is a success not to be despised for itself, and still more valuable as an earnest of future good.

Till we are certain that the prevalence of vice has reached its absolute minimum in the society to which we belong; till we are assured that there is in it the smallest quantity with which it is capable of existing; till every individual is as free from its contamination, as it is morally possible for him to make himself, or others to make him; we have no right to relax our efforts for its discouragement and abandonment. Well directed effort for the moral or religious improvement of our fellow beings is never entirely lost, little as we may ourselves be able to trace its direct operation. Like motion in the physical world, if it does not affect the object against which it is immediately directed, it expends itself somewhere else, and produces in some point or other, all the influence for which it is in its nature calculated.

It is not to be denied, that a survey of the present state of society, as it respects the prevalence of Intemperance, is calculated to give rise to the most gloomy and melancholy contemplations. It is a crime, low, base and debasing in itself, leading in its consequences to crimes of a still darker and more infamous character. Its first effect on the subject of it, is almost to cut him off from his claim to be considered as a rational and moral being; for it deprives him of the free use of his reason, and takes away his sense of responsibility for his actions, and almost of agency in them. Its remote consequences upon all who are connected with him by family, by affection, by friendship, are to bring shame, want, misery, and too often crime itself, to them also. The drunkard is a reproach and a dishonour to the human character. He resigns the chief attributes of his species. He gives himself up, a slave to a single appetite, and, devoured by an insane thirst, lives only for the gratification of one grovelling and brutish propensity.

It is not intended at present to make any new statements, or bring forward any new facts with relation to the extent and progress of the evil in question, as these are already sufficiently obvious and notorious. A more important subject is to inquire, whether every thing which can be done, has been done; whether



what has been done, has been done in the best possible manner ; whether it has been sufficiently practical, whether it has been enough aimed at the root of the matter ; and whether some new course, may not be pointed out, some new measures devised.

In attempting to find a remedy for an evil, the first step is to investigate the causes which have produced it, and which continued it in existence. We conceive that there must be some *peculiar* causes among us, for the great and perhaps continued progress of intemperance, since it has increased more than in proportion to those other vices which attend the growing wealth and prosperity of a community, and forms a larger proportion of the whole quantity of the moral depravity of society in this country, than in any other. For whilst the general standard of virtue both public and private, the tone of moral and religious feeling are no where, perhaps, more elevated than in New-England, there is scarce any other country where the vice of Intemperance is more common among the lower classes of society.

The most important circumstance which has thus *peculiarly* disposed the people of this country to intemperance, is the remarkable facility with which spirituous liquors may be obtained by the labouring classes of society. This we conceive to be, the principal predisposing cause to the habit, and one which gives to the operation of other circumstances their force and effect.

Individuals engaged in active bodily exertions require drink of some sort, at shorter intervals than those engaged in more sedentary occupations ; they will of course prefer that which unites the recommendations of cheapness, palatability, and power of giving a feeling of support and strength. On this account the American chooses spirit, for the same reason that the Frenchmen chooses his native wines—the Englishman his ale and beer—and not because he has any greater propensity to become intemperate. This, to be sure, is a very probable and almost necessary consequence to him who uses spirit, because the feeling of refreshment which it gives, is more powerful and decided at first, but far less permanent, and followed by a greater lassitude and debility, than that from wine or beer. There is therefore a greater temptation to repeat the draught. There is likewise a greater, indeed a very great temptation, to increase the quantity, since spirit, being merely a stimulus, follows the law of all stimuli of that class, and requires a constantly increasing dose to produce the same effect—whilst wine and beer, being in a very considerable degree nutritious, as well as stimulant, do not require to have their

quantity increased, in order to produce the effects which are expected from them. Hence the disposition to intemperance is given to our population, *originally*, by the influence of external circumstances, and they are induced to it, by the nature of the cheapest drink in their power to obtain; whilst the inhabitants of the other countries alluded to, escape it from the very same cause—i. e. because the nature of their cheapest drink offers no inducement to offend by carrying the use of it to excess, since the quantity necessary to inebriation would excite, from its bulk, satiety and disgust.

In this way the individual who makes use of ardent spirits is gradually becoming intemperate before he is aware that there is within him any tendency to it. He gradually increases the number and quantity of his potations, and the physical habit is fairly formed, before the moral sense is awakened. It is frequently said that men rush into habits of intoxication with their eyes open. It is often not so. They are insensible of their danger. Strange as it may seem, it certainly is true, that many drunkards do not know that they are so, when it is visible to every one else. Like some insidious disease, it has undermined the constitution before we are aware of its existence, and then bids defiance to remedies.

Another way in which the facility of obtaining ardent spirits has extended the habit of drinking them to excess, is by the opportunity which it gives of indulging the young in their use, while engaged in labour, as well as those of adult age. At this period of life, as is obvious, they will be more liable to be drawn along from step to step, in the manner we have alluded to, than at a more mature period. They are less likely to be aware of the threatened evil and less able to resist it even if on their guard against it. Were spirits a costly article, they would only be distributed as a sort of luxury to the principal workmen, or at least to the adult, but being so cheap an indulgence, they are extended to boys as an incitement to, and a reward for cheerful and persevering labour. Thus though perhaps not drunkards when young, they have the seeds sown, whose natural and almost inevitable growth will at length make them such.

Another circumstance which contributes to strengthen and increase the habit of drinking, and to make those intemperate, who are as yet accustomed only to a moderate use of spirits while at their work, is the want of interesting occupation for leisure hours, particularly in the evening. The day's labour leaves them in a state of fatigue and lassitude which is the natural signal for sleep. The customs of society lead them to



desire to resist it and this can only be done by the application of excitement to the mind or to the body. Their character, education and pursuits render that of the ordinary society or the conversation of people of their own class insufficient for this purpose; alone—it is tame and tasteless. They require something of a stronger nature to the mind, such as is afforded by gaming, or the intervention of some physical excitement, such as that of ardent spirits. Now this is a cause which would have little influence were it not for the extreme cheapness of the article in question.\*

The first, and one of the most important objects, in directing our attention to the means of checking and suppressing intemperance is to diminish this facility. This may be done by any measures which shall increase the price of ardent spirits, and lessen the number of places at which they can be bought in small quantities. An increase of price can be produced only by the intervention of laws laying heavy taxes on imported, and a heavy excise on distilled liquors. Could the legislature of our country but summon up enough of independence, enough regard for the true happiness and the morality of their constituents, it would not be difficult by laws of this kind to give a decided and effectual check to habits of intemperance.

As it respects laws which make intemperance penal, although such a provision is perfectly just as intemperance is unquestionably a crime against society—yet their influence can only be of a limited extent from the difficulty of having them well executed. The principal difficulty is that the crime does not consist in any particular action, but in a series of actions, in a character. And although something might be done by punishing, as criminal, each individual act of drunkenness, and thus announce—as it were—the opinion which society entertains of the vice, the light in which it is viewed by the government of the country; yet this could not extend very far, since there are few whose habits carry them into open, gross and public exposure, and there is a large class who are very seldom actually intoxicated, who yet keep themselves constantly under the strong influence of spirit, who live as it were in a state of semi-inebriation, who are therefore not tangible by a law nor indeed perhaps by their own consciences.

\* In countries where liquors are high, intemperance is comparatively rare, and in England, such is the price of them that drunkards in order to produce intoxication from the small quantity of liquor they can afford, are in the habit of adding a little nitric acid to their dram in order to give it a more stimulating quality, probably by the conversion of part of the spirit into ether.

It is important that the sense of society should be in some way strongly and decidedly expressed against this vice. It has been considered too lightly and as of too little consequence. And although it is undoubtedly a fact, that it has become disreputable among the better order of society, has become unfashionable and disgraceful, and of course less common, yet among the lower and labouring classes this is not the case, little account is made of it, and it is thought, and spoken of as a light and venial offence.

An effectual method of rousing the public to some attention to this subject is by making and presenting to them strong representations of the great political evil which intemperance inflicts upon the community, of the immense burden which it really though insensibly imposes upon society, of the prodigious tax which it actually levies. Nothing is more true than that our poor laws, and our institutions for the relief of the miseries of poverty, are in fact so many ways of levying a tax upon the country for the support of intemperance, they operate as premiums upon this vice, and it is not too much to say that were it once banished, three quarters of the poverty of the community would be banished with it, and therefore three quarters of what is now expended in its relief virtually saved. Now this is a point upon which men can be made to see and feel. Let them be convinced that paupers are made by the cheapness of ardent spirits, and they would soon be willing to submit to laws, and encourage their enactment which should lessen this cheapness, and make indulgence in intemperance a more difficult matter than it now is.

The measures which have been adopted to exert a moral influence in the suppression of intemperance, seem to have been too much directed towards those who are already intemperate, instead of the large class of those who are standing on the brink of the danger and are about becoming its victims. It is seldom, very seldom indeed that an intemperate man is reclaimed. It is only by the strong effort of a strong mind, under the influence of religious principle, that this can ever be effected. All the powers of persuasion and argument are spent upon him in vain. He is deaf alike to the voice of reason, of interest, of character, of religion, and no motives, whether founded upon a consideration of his temporal or eternal condition have power to move. Our efforts should be directed towards those, in whom exists rather a propensity to the habit than the habit itself. To all, in fact, who are accustomed to the regular use of ardent spirits, even if it be done with temperance and moderation, for all such are in danger either in themselves, or those whom their



example and practice may influence. The father may be moderate, but if the son when a boy is allowed to indulge even to that moderate extent, how shall he be sure that when a man he will not exceed it—is it not even probable that he will?

No man uses ardent spirit to support him in his daily labour with the expectation that he will be thereby induced to become intemperate. There are few who would not, and could not refrain from it, from the very first, if they were convinced that this would be the consequence. Over the intermediate steps they pass blindly, they are only made sensible when past recovery. Intemperance actually formed, should then only be held up as the beacon to avoid, as the horrid consummation of unlimited indulgence. The voice of admonition should be raised—the warning finger pointed, at the first steps which are taken. In short, where there exists such a facility of attaining the means of indulgence, it seems that no middle course can be successful. We must teach, not alone that the intemperate use of ardent spirits is to be avoided, but that their use even in moderation is dangerous, and pernicious. Our grand object should be a thorough one—to discourage and destroy their use in any shape or for any pretence. Let us endeavour to prevent drinking at all, not merely drinking to excess. There are no doubt many who are in no danger from a moderate indulgence; but there are too many others who cannot be moderate, to whom to taste is death; and for the sake of the weaker brother we must endeavour to make the influence universal, that he may not suffer by the example of the stronger.

Nothing indeed can be more clearly proved than that *any* use of ardent spirits is not only unnecessary, but even pernicious. Not that a moderate indulgence, even habitually, is always followed by bad effects, but that so far as they have any effect, it is a bad one. Few men will go through life in such a use of them, who will not be worse in bodily health at fifty or sixty years of age, than if they had entirely avoided them, and few who will not bear in their constitutions and in their diseases, marks of the kind of influence which they have exerted. The only way in which they can possibly have, in their use, a beneficial effect, is when employed as medicines, and it is to be recollected, that by using them freely when in health, we destroy the susceptibility to their stimulus upon which depends their efficacy as medicines. It is as if opium were daily used to procure prolonged and more quiet slumbers than the natural, thereby, rendering the system unfit to be influenced by it as a medicine in sickness.

The impression is to be sure very strong among men who labour hard, and indeed among many who adopt their opinion on the subject, merely because it is the current opinion—that ardent spirits are absolutely necessary to those who have violent bodily exertions to make. They believe that they support the strength and the spirits, that they render them capable of going through with a greater quantity of labour, and of doing it with less fatigue and exhaustion. We believe, as it has been before expressed, that this opinion is totally without foundation. It has been proved to satisfaction, that men who abstain entirely from the use of spirit will labour as long, as cheerfully, with as much strength, and as little subsequent exhaustion, as those who use it. Indeed, it is probable, from what facts are known on this subject, that the advantages of entire abstinence might be stated in still stronger language. During hard labour there is no doubt that men require some refreshment. Muscular exertion of all kinds expends the vital powers, and more particularly the fluids of the system, and therefore creates a demand for more frequent supplies of food and a more copious administration of drink, than under ordinary circumstances. It is not to be denied that at the periods when labourers usually have recourse to ardent spirits, some refreshment is necessary, and that they effect the purpose of immediate excitement far better than anything else. But from what evidence we have been able to collect, we believe that by occasional supplies of very light food, and the frequent drinking of some mild weak and unstimulating beverage, the strength and spirits will be better supported on the whole, the ability to labour hard be greater, and the subsequent fatigue and exhaustion less than when ardent spirits are employed. Men will deceive themselves and attempt to deceive others by asserting the undoubted fact, that if they, by way of trial, leave off the habit of using spirit during their work, they feel bad consequences from it, are more overcome by their labour, and less able to go through with their accustomed task. It is hardly necessary to say that this is no objection to the opinions we have advanced. Those who have been accustomed to a strong stimulus at a particular time, feel very sensibly at first the want of that stimulus, are depressed and disheartened by it. This however is a feeling that leaves them with time, and though affording a very good argument against forming the habit at all, is none against leaving it off.

If any thing is to be done to diminish or to banish the vice of Intemperance, it is conceived that no attempt is likely to be successful which has not at least some regard to the principles which we have alluded to in the course of these remarks.



Any system to be effectual must be thorough, and begin from the very foundation. And in this view something may perhaps be done ;

1. By diminishing, if possible the facility with which the means of indulging in intemperance can be obtained.

2. By producing in all classes of society an abhorrence of the crime, and a public and decided expression of that abhorrence.

3. By directing our efforts more particularly to the young ; impressing them strongly with an opinion of the horrid character of the vice, the insidious nature of its approaches, and the danger arising to them from even a moderate indulgence in spirituous liquors.

4. By producing in all a thorough conviction of the utter uselessness of any recourse to ardent spirits, as a refreshment during labour, and endeavouring in consequence to banish the use of them entirely from civilized society and introducing other mild and innocent substitutes for the use of the labouring classes.

5. By circulating judicious and striking addresses among the labouring poor, containing strong statements of the evil consequences of intemperance to society and to themselves, of its effect on the respectability of their character, its influence on the character of their children, its necessary tendency to poverty, disease and early death ; warning them against the insidious nature of its approaches in themselves, and of the terrible remote consequences which their injudicious indulgence may have upon their children ; making estimates to show them how great a saving may be made, by relinquishing the habit of drinking entirely (which is the only safe, and effectual method) how much may be laid up and left to accumulate, or at least how many solid and substantial comforts may be added to their lot, by appropriating to a different use the money now spent in procuring ardent spirits.

6. By attempting to produce a concert among all who are in the habit of employing large numbers of labourers—in manufactories, or farms—in large towns, or at sea, for the purpose of exciting a powerful influence upon those whom they employ, by giving the preference to those, who will abstain from liquors, offering them the value of what they would drink, in money, instructing them how to appropriate their savings from this source, and in general by precept and example discouraging any use of ardent spirits whatever.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

## VIEWS OF CALVINISM.

[By Professor Norton.]

I regret that the following statements appear, at first view, to have so much of a merely personal bearing. But I think it will be perceived that this is more in appearance, than in reality. A charge of intentional misrepresentation of the doctrines of Calvinism, made against me in the *Christian Spectator*, a periodical work, published at New Haven, has led me to do what I have long thought might be useful. I have in consequence made a collection of quotations from Calvinistic writers of the first authority, for the purpose of showing what Calvinism really is. An article of this sort, it seems to me, may be useful, because there are, without doubt, many who retain an attachment to the name, who, if they fully understood the subject, would regard the system itself with horror; and because many of the pretended defenders of the system among us have been very ready to disclaim its real doctrines, when fairly stated, and to complain without any reason, that these doctrines have been misrepresented by their opponents. I shall first give the passage in the *Spectator*, which has afforded occasion for the present controversy; then the copy of a letter, which I addressed in consequence to the Editor of that work; next the notice of this letter, which appeared in the last number of the *Spectator* (for August,) and finally some remarks of mine upon this notice.

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*Extract from a Review of Erskine on the Internal Evidence of Revealed Religion, and of 'Thoughts on True and False Religion,' published in the Christian Spectator, for May and June 1822, pp. 301, 303.*

'If we have reason to complain of the course of argumentation proposed by Mr. N. we have much more reason to disapprove of the *manner* and the *spirit* in which he has pursued it. But here it is proper that we should let our readers judge for themselves.

"True religion is an inestimable blessing, because it teaches that God is the everlasting Friend and Father of his creatures; a God of infinite goodness. But what shall we say of a religion, which teaches that he has formed men, so that they are by nature wholly inclined to all moral evil; that he has determined in consequence to inflict upon the greater part of our race the most terrible punishments; and that unless he has seen fit to place us among the small number of those whom he has chosen out of the common ruin, he will be our eternal enemy and infinite tormentor; that having hated us from our



birth, he will continue to exercise upon us forever his unrelenting and omnipotent hatred. Whatever may be the worth of true religion, it surely does not follow, that this system of blasphemy must be also of great value, and very beneficial in its effects. Yet he must be a very ignorant, or a very bold man, who will affirm, that the doctrines last stated, have not been taught, and very extensively too, as fundamental doctrines of Christianity."—p. 7.

That no one of his readers may be in doubt for whom this distorted caricature was intended, the author has been careful to place the name of the object at the bottom of the picture. On the next page he writes :—

"When you are satisfied in regard to its faith, you may then examine the scheme of doctrines developed in the Institutes of Calvin, or rather the same scheme, as it appears perfected in the works of the Westminster Assembly. If any one wholly unacquainted with our religion were told that this was Christianity; and that the system taught in these books, was to be found in another collection of books, called the New Testament, I believe his surprise would be uncontrollable and unimaginable, when he came to read the New Testament itself, and to understand what is actually taught there."—p. 8.

Our readers, we are sensible, must be shocked at the spirit which is manifested in these extracts;—especially as it is so diverse from the calm, holy, heavenly spirit which breathes in the passages before quoted from the 'Remarks on the Internal Evidence for the Truth of Revealed Religion.' The author of that treatise, seems to have imbibed the spirit of his Divine Master. His soul is purified and elevated by his views of revealed truth, and he gives his readers a sympathetic and delightful sense of the same serenity and elevation of soul. We seem to ascend to an elevated region, where we enjoy delightful and glorious prospects, and breathe a pure and refreshing air,—far removed from the earth-born feelings and party spirit of angry controversy. From this elevation, it is painful to descend to the level of an author, who can give such a representation as we have just quoted of the sentiments of those whom he opposes, and then brand what he declares to be their opinions, as a "system of blasphemy." Even common candour and civility should have restrained him, from first distorting, and then stigmatizing as *blasphemy*,—doctrines which have been received by a very large proportion of those, who, in every age, have been considered the most intelligent and devout christians, and by not a few who are acknowledged to have been at once the ornaments, and the benefactors of their species, and which were prized by our own learned and pious ancestors, as an inestimable treasure, for which—that they might enjoy it in peace, and deliver it to their posterity—they cheerfully sacrificed all earthly comforts in the settlement of this

country,—doctrines which were not lightly adopted, nor received on the strength of abstract reasonings, but as the result of patient, anxious, and prayerful examination of God's word,—doctrines finally, whose benign and holy influence has been evinced, not merely in a few individuals of distinguished intelligence and piety, but in whole communities, who have received them as the truth of God. So harsh an attack on such a system of doctrines, must have been the result of violent hostility. If any Calvinist,—if even an anonymous pamphleteer, in defending Calvinism, should thus violently attack Unitarianism, as “a system of blasphemy,” would not the mouths of the whole party be opened with accusations of ‘bigotry,’ ‘intolerance,’ want of ‘candour,’ of ‘liberality,’ of ‘charity?’ And is such conduct, we ask, less reprehensible, because it is one of themselves who is guilty of it? Surely, the severity of reproof, which would be deserved by any religious controversialist, who should attempt in this manner to excite a prejudice against the doctrines which he attacks, might be expected to fall with double weight upon one, the inconsistency of whose conduct with his boasted professions, doubly provokes rebuke.

But the spirit of the preceding extracts, and of other passages in this pamphlet, is less painful than the representation contained in them, of doctrines, which the author says, have been “very extensively taught—as fundamental doctrines of Christianity.” Did not the author know, when he penned this passage, that “this system of blasphemy” never was taught, or professed ‘extensively, as fundamental doctrines of Christianity?’—that there never was a sect, or body of men, denominated Christian, who would not reject it as false and injurious, if presented to them as their creed?—that there never was an individual author, of any celebrity or influence, who ever taught, or undertook to defend such doctrines? This, at least, he must have known, that neither ‘the Institutes of Calvin,’ nor ‘the works of the Westminster Assembly,’ nor any of the protestant Confessions of Faith, and, least of all, the confessions of those to whom he intended it should be applied, contain doctrines which are fairly represented by any clause of the foregoing extract. How are we then astonished, when to this injurious representation, the author has the effrontery to add—‘he must be a very ignorant, or a very bold man, who will affirm that the doctrines last stated, have not been taught, and very extensively too, as fundamental doctrines of Christianity.’ The *boldness*, or the *ignorance* plainly belongs to the man, who could bring such a charge against an extensive class of the Christian community—a charge which cannot be substantiated by fair quotations from any standard author, or any pub-



lic confession of faith. Even Toplady, who cannot be considered as the organ or representative of any body of Christians, and whose work seems recently to have disturbed the mind of Mr. Norton,—though he expresses himself, often with carelessness and inaccuracy, and almost always with too much warmth,—would still have rejected such a representation of his sentiments, with an indignation, similar to that with which he repelled a like representation of his antagonist Wesley. We are often compelled to complain, that the opponents of Calvinism, never fairly attack its doctrines, as they are stated by Calvin himself, or exhibited in the creeds of the churches, or the writings of the authors which bear his name. We are sometimes disposed to wonder,—if this system of doctrines be really so absurd, and dangerous, and ‘blasphemous’ too, as is represented,—why it cannot be shown to be so, without resorting to misrepresentation,—and why those who undertake to expose its enormities, are not content sometimes to hold it up, just as it is actually professed and believed. But in the present instance, there is no room for such wonder. The representation is but too evidently made with deliberation and care, and is skilfully adapted to produce the effect intended. It is in no degree the result of mistake. The spirit which dictated the passage, we are pained to say, is the obvious and sufficient cause of the representation it contains.’

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Such is the attack which has been made upon me in the *Spectator*. I now proceed to give an exact copy of the letter which I addressed to the editor. A few notes have been added, containing additional authorities and illustrations, which are included in brackets.

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*Cambridge, July 8th, 1822.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN SPECTATOR.

SIR,

A few days since, I took up in the Boston Athenæum, a number of the *Christian Spectator*, containing the continuation of a review of a tract written by me, entitled *Thoughts on True and False Religion*. In turning over the leaves of this review, my eye was caught by a charge against me, made in very coarse language, of having wilfully and knowingly misstated the doctrines of Calvinism. I have not at present the number of the *Spectator* by me, nor if I had, should I think it necessary to quote the passage, of which I have fairly stated the purport and character. It stands according to a note which I have made on pages 301–303.

A charge of this sort, you may perhaps know, is not esteemed a light matter by men of correct feelings; nor is it ever made by such, in the most guarded terms, upon light or insufficient grounds. That in this particular instance, it is one not likely to affect my character or my peace, and that I am not absolutely required by justice to myself to take notice of it, are circumstances which do not lessen the offence of the reviewer. They show only that his ability to injure is not so strong as his inclination. I have, however, thought proper to take notice of it; and it being directed against my moral character, I have a claim of right and justice to be heard in reply to it in the publication in which it was made. I therefore request you to insert this communication in the next number of the *Spectator*. That I may not be misunderstood, I will state explicitly, that I expect the whole of this letter to be inserted without alteration or omission.

The passage referred to by the reviewer, as a gross misstatement of the doctrines of Calvinism, is the following:

“True religion is an inestimable blessing, because it teaches, that God is the everlasting Friend and Father of his creatures; a God of infinite goodness. But what shall we say of a religion which teaches, that he has formed men, so that they are by nature wholly inclined to all moral evil; that he has determined in consequence to inflict upon the greater part of our race the most terrible punishments; and that unless he has seen fit to place us among the small number of those chosen out of the common ruin, he will be our eternal enemy and infinite tormentor, that having hated us from our birth, he will continue to exercise upon us forever his unrelenting and omnipotent hatred. Whatever may be the worth of true religion, it surely does not follow, that this system of blasphemy must be also of great value, and very beneficial in its effects. Yet he must be a very ignorant or a very bold man, who will affirm, that the doctrines last stated, have not been taught, and very extensively too, as fundamental doctrines of Christianity.”

The reviewer, it may be observed in the first place, does not attempt to show in what respects the doctrines of Calvinism are here misstated. He specifies no error. It shall be my business to shew that there is none. I have not in the passage quoted asserted that the doctrines in question are doctrines of Calvinism. I do now assert it; and in proving the truth of this assertion, shall prove the truth of what I have said, concerning the extent to which these doctrines have prevailed. In order to prevent all quibbling about the word, I wish it to be understood, that when I say these are doctrines of Calvinism, I mean that they either make a part of the system, or are obviously and inti-



imately connected with it, and have been avowed and defended as such, by Calvinistic writers of the highest authority with their own body.

The propositions contained in the passage which has been quoted, are the following.

1. God has formed men.
2. They are so formed, or in other words, God has so formed them, that they are by nature wholly inclined to all moral evil.
3. That in consequence of this nature, God inflicts, upon those who remain as they were thus formed to be, the most terrible punishments; that he will be their eternal enemy and infinite tormentor; that having hated them from their birth, he will continue to exercise upon them forever his unrelenting and omnipotent hatred.
4. That he has chosen some to be saved out of the common ruin.
5. That the number of these is comparatively small.

If I had not been in some degree acquainted with theological controversy, and especially with theological controversy, as it has been of late carried on by some writers in our own country, I might have felt surprise, that any one should have confidence to deny that these are doctrines of Calvinism. If any reply should be attempted to this communication, I expect it to be stated explicitly, which of them it is pretended is not. In the mean time, I shall show that they are all doctrines of Calvinism. In doing this, I shall use but few authorities. Those however will be of the highest character. I might, if the case required it, produce an indefinite number of others.

With regard to the first proposition, that God has formed men, or that God is our Creator; that whatever we are when we come into existence, he forms us such as we are, I trust there will be no dispute. I suppose no one will deny it to be a doctrine of Calvinism, that God is the Creator of men.

The second proposition is; that when formed or created by God, men are so formed, that they are wholly inclined to all moral evil.

So says the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism.

'The Fall brought mankind into an estate of sin and misery'  
\*\*\*\*\* 'The sinfulness of that estate whereinto men fell, consists in the guilt of Adam's first sin, the want of that righteousness, wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature, whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that

continually, which is commonly called Original Sin, and from which do proceed all actual transgressions.

So says the Westminster Assembly's Confession. (Ch. IX.)

'Man by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.'

It is evident that in these passages, is described the present state of men, as they come into the world from the hands of their Creator. The language is stronger than that which I have used. Nobody, I suppose, can be weak enough to imagine that the circumstance, that the fall of Adam is here assigned as the cause, why men are in this state, affects the correctness of my account of the state itself as here described.

I add a few more passages. The following is from Calvin's Short Formula of a Confession of Faith.

I confess that in original sin are comprehended blindness of mind, and perversity of heart; so that we are entirely despoiled and destitute of every thing connected with eternal life; so that even our very natural faculties are all depraved and contaminated. Whence it is that we are moved from within by no thought to do well. Wherefore I detest those who ascribe to us any freedom of will, by which we may prepare ourselves to receive the grace of God; or by which we may of ourselves co-operate with the Holy Spirit, which may be given us.\*

The next passage is from President Edwards.

'I now proceed to say; that mankind are all naturally in such a state, as is attended without fail with this consequence or issue, that they universally run themselves into that, which is, in effect, their own utter perdition, as being finally accursed by God, and the subjects of his remediless wrath through sin.†

It is, I conceive, unnecessary to quote a larger number of passages to the present point.‡ The next proposition which I am to prove a doctrine of Calvinism is this:

\* Confiteor originis peccato, &c. Calvini Tractatus Theologici. p. 90. [The words which immediately precede the passage quoted in the text, are the following: 'We are every one of us born infected with original sin, and from our mother's womb are under the curse of God, and a sentence of damnation—*ab ipso matris utero a Deo maledicti ac damnati*—and this not on account of another's sin only, but on account of the wickedness, which is within us even when it does not show itself.']

† Edwards on Original Sin. Ch. I. Sect. I. Works, Vol. 6. p. 137.

‡ [I will however add a few more passages from the full storehouse of Edwards.

'If by flesh and spirit, when spoken of in the New Testament, and opposed to each other in discourses on the necessary qualifications of religion,



That in consequence of the nature which has been described as common to all men, God inflicts upon those who retain the nature with which he formed them, the most terrible punishments, that he will be their eternal enemy and infinite tormentor, that having hated them from their birth, he will continue to exercise upon them forever his unrelenting and omnipotent hatred.

The expressions are sufficiently shocking. They are not quite so much so, however, as those which may be found in Calvinistic writers of the best repute. With regard to the doctrine itself, let us hear the testimony of the Westminster Divines, as given in their Larger Catechism :

‘The fall brought upon mankind the loss of communion with God, his displeasure and curse, so as we are by nature children of wrath, bond slaves of Satan, and justly liable to all punishments in this world, and that which is to come.

‘The punishments of sin in this world are either inward, as blindness of mind, a reprobate sense, strong delusions, hardness of heart, horror of conscience, and vile affections ; or outward, as the curse of God upon the creatures for our sakes, and

we are to understand what has been now supposed, it will not only follow that men are by nature corrupt, but wholly corrupt, without any good thing. If by flesh is meant man’s nature, as he receives it in his first birth, then *therein dwelleth no good thing*; as appears by Rom vii. 18. It is wholly opposite to God and to subjection to his law ; as appears by Rom. viii. 7, 8. It is directly contrary to true holiness, and wholly opposes it, and holiness is opposite to that ; as appears by Gal. v. 17. So long as men are in their natural state, they not only have no good thing, but it is impossible that they should have or do any good thing.’ *On Original Sin. Works, vol. vi. p. 322.*

‘So that on the whole, there is sufficient reason to understand the apostle, when he speaks of the *natural* man in that I Cor. ii. 14. as meaning man in his native corrupt state. And his words represent him as totally corrupt, wholly a stranger and enemy to true virtue or holiness, and things appertaining to it, which it appears are commonly intended in the New Testament by things *spiritual*, and are doubtless here meant by *things of the Spirit of God*. These words also represent that it is impossible man should be otherwise while in his natural state.’ *Ibid. p. 324.*

‘If the scriptures represent all mankind as wicked in their first state, before they are made partakers of the benefits of Christ’s redemption, then they are wicked by nature ; for doubtless men’s first state is their native state, or the state they come into the world in. But the scriptures do thus represent all mankind.’ *Ibid. p. 325.*

‘If it be so with all mankind, that as soon as ever they are capable of reflecting and knowing their own moral state, they find themselves wicked, this proves that they are wicked by nature ; either born wicked, or born with an infallible disposition to be wicked as soon as possible, if there be any difference between these, and either of them will prove men to be born exceedingly depraved.’ *Ibid. pp. 325, 326.]*

all other evils that befall us in our bodies, names, estates, relations and employments, together with death itself.

‘The punishments of sin in the world to come are everlasting separation from the comfortable presence of God, and most grievous torments in soul and body, without intermission, in Hell-fire forever.’

To all these punishments, it is to be observed, we are justly liable for what we are by nature.

In the second book of his Institutes, Ch. II. § 8. Calvin defines original sin to be ‘the hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature, extending to every part of the mind, which, in the first place, makes us justly liable to the wrath of God; (quæ primum facit reos iræ Dei;) and next produces those works in us, which the Scripture calls the works of the flesh.’

Whether Calvin was likely to shrink from the doctrine which I have stated, as too horrible to make a part of his system, may be judged from the following passage; (Instit. III. 24. § 12.) where he is treating of predestination.

‘With regard to those whom God created for contumely in life and for eternal death, that they might be vessels of his wrath, and examples of his severity; he, in order that they may come to their appointed end, at one time, deprives them of the power of hearing his word, and at another, blinds and stupifies them the more by its preaching.’\*

\* [Respecting the natural state of man, I will add the following passages from Calvin.

‘By nature, we are heirs of eternal damnation, because all the human race was cursed in Adam.’ *Adversus Franciscanum. Tractatus Theologici*, p. 403.

‘We do not say, that any new nature was transmitted to us by Adam, but that God by a just judgment pronounced a curse upon us in Adam, and determined that we on account of his sin, should be born in a state of corruption.—*Novam ergo naturam ab Adamo traditam esse non dicimus, sed Deum justo judicio nobis in ipso maledixisse, ac voluisse nos, ob illius peccatum, corruptos nasci.*’ *Ibid.* p. 405.

‘I acknowledge this to be my doctrine, that not merely by the permission of God, but by his secret counsel, Adam fell, and by his fall drew all his posterity into eternal ruin’ \*\*\*\*\* ‘One fell, and all were brought under punishment; nor this alone; through the sin of one all receive contagion, and are born corrupted, and infected with a deadly taint. What, my good censor, do you say to this? Will you charge God with cruelty, because he cast down all his offspring to destruction through the fall of one man? For though Adam ruined himself and his descendants, yet we must ascribe the corruption, and the state of guilt, in man, to the secret judgment of God; for the sin of one man would have been nothing to us, if the heavenly judge had not condemned us to eternal destruction.’ *Respon. ad. calumnias nebulonis. Tract. Theol.* p. 634.

‘If any one attack us with such an inquiry as this, why God has from the beginning predestinated some men to death, who not yet being brought



It cannot be denied that it is a doctrine of Calvinism, that God by his absolute decrees determines the character and condition of men, both in this life and the next. He has determined, according to this system, from all eternity, that the reprobate should retain the nature with which they were born; that they should in consequence be sinners, and should in consequence be the eternal objects of his vengeance. He may be said therefore to have hated them, not merely from their birth, but before their birth,—from eternity. I have said, that it cannot be denied, that what I have stated is a doctrine of Calvinism. I ought to correct myself. It may be denied by some anonymous scribbler without truth and without shame.\*

into existence, could not deserve the sentence of death, we, by way of answer, will ask them in return what they suppose God owes to man, if he chooses to judge him conformably to man's own nature. As we are all corrupted by sin, we must necessarily be odious to God, and that not from tyrannical cruelty, but according to the most equitable rules of justice. If all whom God predestinates to death, are in their natural condition liable to the sentence of death; of what injustice, I pray, do they complain toward themselves? Let all the sons of Adam come forward; let them contend and dispute with their creator, because by his eternal providence, they were, before their birth, adjudged to endless misery. What murmur will they be able to raise against this vindication, when God on the other hand shall call them to a review of themselves. If they are all taken from a corrupt mass, it is no wonder, if they all lie under a sentence of damnation. Let them not therefore accuse God of injustice, if by his eternal decree, they are destined to death, to which they feel themselves led on by their own nature, of itself, whether they will or not—*ad quam [mortem] a sua ipsorum natura sponte se perducere, velint nolint, ipsi sentiunt.* *Institut. lib. iii. c. xxiii. § 3.*

The following is the account of original sin, given by the famous Synod of Dort.

'All men are conceived in sin, and born children of wrath, without ability for any good tending to salvation, inclined to evil, dead in sins, and slaves of sin; and without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, have neither will nor power to return to God, to correct their depraved nature, or to dispose themselves to its correction.'

*Acta Synodi Dordrechtanæ (fol. A.D. 1620) Pars. i. p. 256.*

The following is the account in the Confession of the Belgic Churches, exhibited before that Council.

We believe that by the disobedience of Adam, Original Sin was diffused through the whole race of man; which is the corruption of the whole nature and an hereditary depravity, by which even infants are polluted in their mother's womb; and which is so vile and execrable in the sight of God, that it is sufficient for the condemnation of the human race. *Ibid. p. 305.]*

\* [The doctrine stated in the text is the Calvinistic doctrine of God's decrees. Respecting this subject the reader may consult Calvin's *Institutes*, lib. i. c. 16, 17, 18. but especially lib. iii. c. 21, 22, 23, 24. I will quote a few passages.

'All things being at God's disposal, and the decision of salvation or death belonging to him, he orders all things by his counsel and decree in

I will next quote a few passages from President Edwards, in proof that the doctrine under consideration is a doctrine of Calvinism.

such a manner, that some men are born devoted from the womb to certain death; that his name may be glorified in their destruction. If any one should pretend, that no necessity is imposed upon them by the foreknowledge of God; but rather that such is the condition under which they have been created, in consequence of his foreknowledge of their future depravity, he will say what is partly true, but not the whole truth. \*\*\*\*\* If God merely foresaw the fates of men, and did not also dispose and fix them by his determination, there would be room to agitate the question, whether his foresight rendered them at all necessary. But since he foresees future events, only in consequence of his decree that they shall take place, it is useless to dispute about the proper inference from foreknowledge, while it is certain that all things come to pass by ordination and decree.' *Institut.* lib. iii. c. 23. § 6.

In answer to those who say 'that it is no where declared in express terms that God decreed Adam should perish by his defection' Calvin replies: (in the next section to that just quoted.)

'But predestination, whether they will or not, shows itself in his posterity. For it was not a natural consequence (*neque enim factum est naturaliter*) that all men should lose salvation through the guilt of their first parent. What then prevents them from confessing that to be true in relation to one man, which they reluctantly concede in relation to all the rest of mankind? Why should they waste time in sophistical evasions? The scripture proclaims, that all men were in the person of their father given over to eternal death. As this cannot be regarded as a natural consequence (*hoc quum naturæ ascribi nequeat*), it is evident that it must have been the result of the admirable counsel of God. The perplexity and hesitation discovered at trifles by these pious defenders of the justice of God, and their facility in overcoming great difficulties, are truly absurd. I ask again; how has it come to pass, that the fall of Adam has involved so many nations with their infant children in eternal death, and this without remedy; but because such was the will of God? \*\*\*\*\* *It is a dreadful decree I confess.*

*Decretum quidem horribile fateor.* Calvin was not much given to such human relentings; and the last words are on this account worth preserving as a matter of curiosity.

'The reprobate,' says Calvin, 'would be thought excusable in sinning; because they cannot avoid the necessity of sinning, especially as this necessity is imposed upon them by the ordinance of God.'

There seems to be some little force in this plea; but it is easily disposed of by Calvin, who detects its sophistry in the following satisfactory answer.

'But we deny this to be a just excuse; since the ordinance of God, by which they complain that they are destined to destruction, is conformable to equity, unknown indeed to us, but indubitably certain.' *Ibid.* § 9.

In the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism, the doctrine of God's decrees is thus stated:

'God's decrees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel of his will; whereby from all eternity, he hath for his own glory, unchangeably



The express purpose of the third of his Fifteen Sermons is to prove, that *men are naturally God's enemies*, which words are the title of the sermon. His third inference is ; 'From this doctrine you may learn, how dreadful the condition of natural man is : ' That is, how dreadful the condition of men is as created by

foreordained whatever comes to pass in time ; especially concerning men and angels.'

'God by an eternal and immutable decree, out of his mere love, for the praise of his glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, hath elected some angels to glory, and in Christ hath chosen some men to eternal life, and the means thereof ; and also according to his sovereign power and the unsearchable counsel of his own will (whereby he extendeth or withholdeth favour as he pleaseth) hath passed by, and fore-ordained the rest to dishonour and wrath, to be for their sin inflicted, to the praise of the glory of his justice '

On this subject the reader may further consult various parts of the writings of Edwards, particularly his Miscellaneous Observations, on the Divine Decrees and Election, in the fifth volume of his works.

'God' says Edwards, 'decrees all things and even all sins.\*\*\*\* God determines the limits of men's lives \*\*\*If the limits of men's lives are determined, men's free actions must be determined, and even their sins ; for their lives often depend on such acts.' pp. 378, 379.

The purpose of God in creation, and in his decrees respecting his creatures, is thus explained by Edwards.

'The moral rectitude and fitness of disposition, inclination, or affection of God's heart, does chiefly consist in a respect or regard to himself, infinitely above his regard to all other beings : or in other words his holiness consists in this.

'And if it be thus fit that God should have a supreme regard to himself, then it is fit that this supreme regard should appear in those things by which he makes himself known, or by his *word* and *works* ; i. e. in what he says, and in what he does. If it be an infinitely amiable thing in God, that he shall have a supreme regard to himself, then it is an amiable thing that he should act as having a chief regard to himself.' (*Concerning the end for which God created the world.* Works, vol. vi. pp. 24, 25.)

Accordingly, Edwards undertakes to prove, that 'God manifests a supreme and ultimate regard to himself in all his works ;' (Ibid p. 34.) and that 'God's glory is an ultimate end of the Creation ;' (Ibid. p. 68,) and that 'God created the world for his name to make his perfections known, and that he made it for his praise.' (Ibid. p. 87.)

Corresponding to these representations ; the reprobate, that is far the greater part of mankind are ordained to sin, and to suffer eternal torments, to the 'praise of his glorious justice.'

'The rest of mankind [with the exception of the elect] God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy, as he pleaseth FOR THE GLORY OF HIS SOVEREIGN POWER OVER HIS CREATURES, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, TO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORIOUS JUSTICE. (*Westminster Assembly's Confession.* Ch. iii.

But I forbear. In quoting BLASPHEMY like this, I can hardly avoid feeling, as if I shared in the guilt of uttering it.]

God ; they are by their very nature sinners, enemies of God, children of wrath, and justly liable to infinite, eternal, inconceivable torments.

Men are by nature sinners, let us see then how they must be and are regarded by God. I quote from President Edwards' sermon entitled, *Sinners in the hands of an angry God*.

'So that thus it is, that NATURAL MEN are held in the hands of God over the pit of hell ; they have deserved the fiery pit, and are already sentenced to it ; and God is dreadfully provoked, his anger is as great toward them as to those that are actually suffering the execution of the fierceness of his wrath in hell ; \*\*\*\*\* the devil is waiting for them ; hell is gaping for them ; the flames gather and flash about them and would fain lay hold on them and swallow them up.\*'

Again, from the same sermon :

'They are now the objects of the very same anger and wrath of God, that is expressed in the torments of hell. And the reason why they do not go down to hell at each moment, is not because God in whose power they are, is not very angry with them ; as angry as he is with any of those miserable creatures, that he is now tormenting in hell, and do there feel and bear the fierceness of his wrath.†'

The following words from the same discourse are of course addressed to all the unregenerate, to all those who retain the nature given them by God at their birth, and who have not been born again, in the Calvinistic use of that phrase.

'The God who holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked : his wrath towards you burns like fire ; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire ; he is of purer eyes, than to bear to have you in his sight ; you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes, as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours.'

Thus it is that God regards all his human creatures, in their natural state, that is, as created by him ; unless indeed you choose the gross inconsistency and absurdity of putting an atheistical sense upon the words *nature* and *natural*, and supposing that that may be by nature, and may be natural, which is not from God. All God's human creatures, as created by him, are 'ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes, as the most ugly and venomous serpent is in ours.'

Are my expressions that God will be the eternal enemy and infinite tormentor of a large proportion of his creatures ; and the

\* Works, vol. vii. p. 493.

† Ibid. p. 439.



other expressions corresponding to them, objected against? I only ask, that they may be compared with those in the passages last quoted, and with a thousand more of a similar character which might be produced from Edwards, (particularly from his sermons on the eternity of hell torments,) and from other Calvinistic writers.

It is abundantly evident from the preceding passages, that, according to the Calvinistic system, God hates men, and will be their eternal tormentor, in consequence of the nature with which they are born. That he hates them not merely on account of what will necessarily flow from this nature, but on account of the nature itself, is particularly shown by another article of Calvinistic belief, that infants are proper subjects of the eternal torments of hell.

This doctrine is repeatedly urged by Calvin:

‘And so even infants bring their damnation with them from their mothers’ womb; for although they have not yet produced the fruits of their iniquity, they have the seed of it inclosed within them. Nay, their whole nature is, as it were, a seed of sin; so that it cannot be otherwise than odious and abominable to God.’\*

In one place he indignantly disavows the opposite opinion.

‘As if I denied that the whole race of Adam, was by nature, under a curse, so that even infants before being born to light are liable to eternal death.’†

In the Westminster Assembly’s Confession (c. x.) *elect* infants are spoken of in contradistinction from others, which implies that there are others who are reprobate.

Concerning the case of these poor reprobates, sinners before being moral agents, some more tender-hearted Calvinists have been inclined to believe, that their future condition would not be worse than nonexistence. But Edwards, with proper consistency, gives them up to the full torments of hell.

This former supposition, he says, ‘to me, appears plainly a giving up that grand point of the imputation of Adam’s sin, both in whole and in part. For it supposes it to be not right, for God to bring any evil on a child of Adam, which is innocent as to personal sin, without paying for it, or balancing it with good; so that still the state of the child shall be as good as could be demanded in justice in case of mere innocence. Which plainly supposes that the child is not exposed to any proper punishment

\* Instit. Lib. iv. c. 15. § 10.

† Append. Lib. de vera Eccles. reform. ratione. in his Tractatus Theologici. p. 301.

at all, or is not at all in debt to divine justice on account of Adam's sin.'\*\*\*\*\*

'It seems to me pretty manifest that none can, in good consistence with themselves, own a real imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin to his posterity, without owning that they are justly viewed and treated as sinners, truly guilty and children of wrath on that account; nor unless they allow a just imputation of the whole of the evil of transgression; at least, all that pertains to the essence of that act, as a full and complete violation of the covenant which God had established; even as much as if each one of mankind had the like covenant established with him singly, and had by the like direct and full act of rebellion violated it for himself.'\*

If indeed, God do create men with a nature which necessarily makes them objects of his vengeance, and for the purpose of exercising this vengeance upon them, it is of no consequence whether the interval between their creation and their sufferings be longer or shorter; whether he keep them in this world an hour or a century. If as moral agents, they can do nothing to deliver themselves from his curse, it is of no consequence whether those on whom his curse is inflicted, are what may be called moral agents or not. If he form men with moral natures wholly inclined to all evil, under an absolute decree of reprobation, he might in equal consistency with justice, form them with such natures and place them in hell by the same act of his sovereignty.†

\* Edwards on Original Sin. Works, vol. vi. p. 462.

† [With regard to the punishment to which all men are 'justly liable' by nature, the imagination of Edwards, though not a very active faculty of his mind, absolutely revels and runs riot in its description.

The following is from his Sermon entitled, *MEN NATURALLY God's enemies.*

'If you continue God's enemy until death, you will always be his enemy. And after death your enmity will have no restraint, but it will break out, and rage without control. When you come to be a firebrand of hell, you will be a fire brand in two respects, viz. As you will be all on fire, full of the fire of God's wrath. And also as you will be all on a blaze with spite and malice towards God. You will be as full of the fire of malice, as you will with the fire of divine vengeance; and both will make you full of torment. Then you will appear as you are, a viper indeed. You are now a viper, but under great disguise; a wolf in sheep's clothing; but then your mask will be pulled off; you shall lose your garments and walk naked, Rev. xvi. 15. Then will you as a serpent spit poison at God, and vent your rage and malice in fearful blasphemies. Out of that mouth, out of which, when you open it will proceed flames, will also proceed dreadful blasphemies against God. That same tongue, to cool which you will wish for a drop of water, will be eternally employed in cursing and blaspheming God and Christ. Works, vol. vii. p. 198.



The next proposition to be proved a doctrine of Calvinism, is that *God has chosen some to be saved out of the common ruin.*

See the Westminster Assembly's Confession (c. x.)

The horror of this passage is in some degree aggravated, when viewed in connexion with the doctrine of the damnation of infants, and when it is recollected, that this is the description of the future state of many of those little 'vipers.'

I quote another passage;—from his sermon on the Punishment of the Wicked.

'We can conceive but little of the matter\*\*\*\*\* But to help your conception, imagine yourself to be cast into a fiery oven, all of a glowing heat, or into the midst of a glowing brick-kiln, or of a great furnace, where your pain would be as much greater, than that occasioned by accidentally touching a coal of fire, as the heat is greater. Imagine also that your body were to lie there for a quarter of an hour, full of fire, as full within and without as a light coal of fire, all the while full of quick sense; what horror would you feel at the entrance of such a furnace! And how long would that quarter of an hour seem to you! If it were to be measured by a glass, how long would the glass seem to be a running! And after you had endured it for one minute, how overbearing would it be to you to think that you had it to endure the other fourteen.

'But what would be the effect on your soul, if you knew that you must lie there enduring that torment to the full for twenty four hours! And how much greater would be the effect, if you knew you must endure it for a whole year; and how vastly greater still, if you knew that you must endure it for a thousand years. O then, how would your heart sink, if you thought, if you knew, that you must bear it for ever and ever! That there would be no end! That after millions of millions of ages, your torment would be no nearer to an end than ever it was; and that you never, never should be delivered.

'But your torment in hell will be immensely greater than this illustration represents.' *Ibid.* pp. 387, 388,

Again:

'The wicked in hell will not be able in that conflict to overcome their enemy, and to deliver themselves. God, who will then undertake to deal with them, and will gird himself with might to execute wrath, will be their enemy, and will act the part of an enemy with a witness; and they will have no strength to oppose him.\*\*\*\*\* They will have no power, no might, to resist that omnipotence which will be engaged against them. They will have no strength in their hands to do any thing to appease God, or in the least to abate the fierceness of his wrath. pp. 383, 384.

'If the strength of all the wicked men on earth, and all the devils in hell were united in one, and thou wert possessed of it all, and if the courage, greatness and stoutness of all their hearts were united in thy single heart, thou wouldst be nothing in the hands of Jehovah. If it were all collected, and thou shouldst set thyself to bear as well as thou couldst, all would sink under his great wrath in an instant, and be utterly abolished. Thine hands would drop down at once, and thine heart would melt as wax. The great mountains, the firm rocks, cannot stand before the power of God; as fast as they stand, they are tossed hither and thither, and skip like lambs when God appears in his anger. He can tear the earth in pieces in a moment; yea he can shatter the whole universe, and dash it to pieces at one blow. How then will thine hands be strong or thine heart endure.' pp. 392, 393.

‘ All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased in his appointed and accepted time, effectually

Such passages as I have quoted glare upon the reader throughout the *Fifteen Sermons of Edwards*. The volume is darkened and discolored with the flames and smoke of Hell, represented as curling round far the greater part of the human race.

‘ How dismal will it be when you are under these racking torments, to know assuredly that you never, never, shall be delivered from them ; to have no hope. When you shall wish that you might be turned into nothing, but shall have no hope of it ; when you shall wish that you might be turned into a toad or serpent, but shall have no hope of it : when you would rejoice, if you might but have any relief, after you have endured these torments millions of ages, but shall have no hope of it ; when after you have worn out the ages of the sun, moon, and stars in your dolorous groans and lamentations, without rest day or night, or one minute’s ease, yet you shall have no hope of ever being delivered ; when after you have worn out a thousand more such ages, yet you shall have no hope, but shall know that you are not one whit nearer the end of your torments ; but that still there are the same groans, the same shrieks the same doleful cries incessantly to be made by you and that the smoke of your torment shall still ascend for ever and ever ; and that your souls which have been agitated by the wrath of God all this while, yet will still exist to bear more wrath ; your bodies which will have been burning and roasting all this while in these glowing flames, yet shall not have been consumed, but will remain to roast through an eternity yet, which will not have been at all shortened by what shall have been past.’ *Sermon on the Eternity of Hell Torments.* pp. 418, 419.

These are ‘ the most grievous torments in soul and body without intermission in Hell-fire forever,’ to which Calvinism teaches that we are ‘ justly liable’ for what we are by nature. It is in order that they may endure these torments, ‘ FOR THE GLORY OF HIS SOVEREIGN POWER OVER HIS CREATURES,’ as the Westminster divines express themselves, that the God of all favour and consolation has created far the greater part of men. Of the countless multitudes of human beings who have dwelt on our globe, there are very few, the end of whose creation as decreed by God, was not their infinite and eternal wretchedness. To this they were ordained, and for this they have been prepared by him. He has successively sent them into the world with such natures, that they were ‘ utterly indisposed, disabled and made opposite’ to every act, but such as might incur his vengeance.

It may seem, as if nothing could be added to aggravate the horror and disgust which such a doctrine is adapted to produce. But it is not so. There is something, I think, more inexpressibly loathsome, in the following passage from Edwards, than in any thing I have yet quoted.

‘ The sight of hell-torments will exalt the happiness of the saints for ever. It will not only make them more sensible of the greatness and freeness of the grace of God in their happiness ; but it will really make their happiness the greater, as it will make them more sensible of their own happiness ; it will give them a more lively relish of it ; it will make them prize it more. When they see others, who were of the same nature, and born under the same circumstances, plunged in such misery, and they so distinguished, O it will make them sensible how happy they are. A sense of the opposite misery, in all cases, greatly increases the relish of any joy or pleasure.’

What must be the effect of such a belief, as is here expressed, in brutalizing the whole character of him by whom it is held. Such are the DOCTRINES OF DEVILS, which have been taught under the insulted name of Christianity.]



to call, by his word and spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ.'

I shall quote no other authority. As this doctrine is the only redeeming feature of Calvinism, if indeed it deserve that name, I suppose it will not be denied to be a part of the system. Otherwise it might be denied to be so, with just as much pretence and plausibility, as any other of the doctrines I have stated, with which it is intimately and essentially connected.

I am now then to prove it a doctrine of Calvinism, that *the number of those saved out of the common ruin of mankind is comparatively small.*

In proof of this proposition, I might, perhaps, content myself with appealing generally to the declamations, with which everyone acquainted with Calvinistic writings must be familiar, concerning the general depravity of the world, and the small number of the saints, as contradistinguished from each other. But I shall adduce more particular evidence.

'And indeed it is not wonderful,' says Calvin, 'that they who are born in darkness, harden themselves more and more in their stupidity, because very few (*paucissimi*), that they may be restrained within bounds, attend with docility to the word of God; but they rather exult in their own vanity.\*'

In commenting upon the words in the prayer of our Saviour, John xvii. 9. he says: 'Whence it appears that the whole world does not belong to its creator; only that grace snatches a few (*non multos*) from the curse and wrath of God and from eternal death, who would otherwise perish; but leaves the world in the ruin, to which it has been ordained.†'

I give a few more quotations from Calvin.

'Especially is it the lot of Christians to be hated by the greater part of men.'\*\*\*\* 'Satan, the prince of the world never ceases to arm his followers with madness to insult the members of Christ.†'

In commenting upon the beautiful and affecting invitation of Christ, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden*, the temper and views of Calvin are sufficiently discovered:

'And yet all (who accept this invitation) are few in number;

\* Institut: Lib. i. C. iv. § 2.

† The words of this extraordinary passage deserve to be given in the original: 'Unde fit ut totus mundus ad creatorem non pertineat; nisi quod a maledictione et ira Dei, ac morte æterna non multos eripit gratia, qui alioqui perituri erant; mundum autem, in suo interitu, cui destinatus est, reliquit.' Institut. Lib. iii. C. 22. § 7.

† Comment: in Harm. Evang. p. 65.

because out of the innumerable multitude of those who are perishing, but few perceive that they are perishing.\*

In the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism, we are told:

'They who having never heard the Gospel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in him, cannot be saved, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, or the law of that religion which they profess; neither is there salvation in any other, but in Christ alone, who is the Saviour only of his body, the Church.'

'The visible church consists of all those who profess the true religion; [i. e. Calvinism] and their children;' But

'All that hear the gospel and live in the visible church, are not saved.'

I think it must be granted that according to the Westminster Assembly, the number of the reprobate far exceeds that of the elect.

I will now quote from Edwards.

'That there are generally but few good men in the world, even among them that have the most distinguishing and glorious advantages for it, which they are favoured with that live under the gospel, is evident from that saying of our Lord, from time to time in his mouth, *many are called, but few are chosen*. And if there are but few among those, how few, how very few indeed, must persons of this character be, compared with the whole world of mankind? The exceeding smallness of the number of true saints, compared with the whole world, appears by the representations often made of them as distinguished from the world.†

I might very well stop here, but the harvest of such passages is abundant.

'If we observe the history of the old Testament, there is reason to think, there never was any time from Joshua to the captivity, wherein wickedness was more restrained, and virtue and religion more encouraged and promoted than in David's and Solomon's times. And if there was so little true piety in that nation, that was the only people of God under heaven, in their very best times, what may we suppose concerning the world in general, take one time with another.‡

I have thus given proof from the best authorities, that the propositions which I have declared to be doctrines of Calvinism are such. I think I shall not again be charged, as I have been by your reviewer, with borrowing my notions of Calvinism from

\* Comment: in Harm. Evang. p. 131.

† Edwards on Original Sin. Works, vol. vi. p. 190.

‡ Ibid. p. 192.



Toplady, a writer into whose works I never have looked. I am convinced, that the great body of common Christians who bear the name of Calvinists in New-England, a portion of our community of whom I never have spoken with disrespect, because I never have felt it, are, in truth, but very imperfectly acquainted with that system from which they derive their appellation. This circumstance has afforded opportunity for a despicable controversial artifice, (if it deserve the name of artifice,) which has of late been freely resorted to by some of the professed defenders of the Calvinistic faith. Instead of endeavouring to maintain, they have denied the doctrines of their own system. They have had the assurance to assert that *that* was not Calvinism, which for almost three centuries, every theologian has known and acknowledged to be Calvinism. They have refused, when pressed hardy, and the occasion has required it, to acknowledge the fundamental doctrines of their own creeds and confessions and standard writers. They have not given them up explicitly and honestly, and said they could not defend them, but they have, in fact, denied the Calvinistic faith, at the very moment they have been pretending to support it, and have been reviling those by whom it was openly opposed. The folly of this artifice is on a level with its disingenuousness.

You will, without doubt, be unwilling to publish this communication in your work. Before refusing to do it, however, I beg you to consider, that you have admitted into your work a gross attack upon my character, not as a writer, but as a man, and that you cannot, consistently with honour and justice, refuse me an opportunity of answering such a charge in the work in which it was made; that, in the next place, in meeting you as it were upon your own ground, and asking for the insertion of this article in your own work, I give you every advantage; for you may surround it with comments and answers to do away its effect, of all which, probably, I shall take no notice; that, further, it consists principally of extracts from the highest Calvinistic authorities, and that it will be hard to deny your readers the benefit of so much sound doctrine, because it has been brought together by an heretical collector; and lastly that if you do not insert it in your work; I shall take every other means in my power to give it publicity, that it will probably find its way to many of your readers, and that they will receive it with an impression particularly unfavourable to yourself and your cause, that you were afraid to admit it into your publication.

Whatever reply may be made to this communication, it must be recollected, that the main question at issue is, whether I have misrepresented the doctrines of Calvinism. Every thing which does not bear upon this point will be irrelevant and impertinent.

In order to prove this point, it will be necessary, in the first place, to show that my quotations from Calvinistic authors do not coincide with and confirm my propositions; and then, to point out specifically, the errors in those propositions, and to shew by proper authorities, that they are errors. No reply of this sort, I am confident, will be given. But whatever may be attempted, I must claim the privilege of making a rejoinder in your work. It is not probable, indeed, that I shall use this privilege. But your reviewer, or any other writer of a similar character, is obviously not to be trusted to make assertions, without the salutary dread of an answer upon his mind; though the dread of an answer may prevent its necessity.

If you do not insert this communication, in your next number, and I do not in the mean time, hear from you, I shall understand that you decline publishing it, and take measures accordingly.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.

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The following is the notice of the preceding letter, which appeared in the number of the Spectator for August, printed exactly as it there stands.

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‘We have received a letter of nearly five sheets from Professor Norton, in which he attempts to fasten upon us the charge of falsehood for our denial that the writings of Calvin or of the Westminster Divines, will support his statement of the leading doctrines of Calvinism. After the treatment which Dr. Miller, in similar circumstances, received from the “Unitarian Miscellany,” we should be justified in coolly informing Prof. Norton that if he chooses to publish his letter in the form of a pamphlet, at his own expense, we will consent to its being stitched up with one of our numbers, and circulated among our subscribers. But we will not follow such an example. Prof. Norton’s communication shall be inserted whenever it is purged of those reproachful and menacing expressions which he well knew could be endured by no man who is not lost to every feeling of self-respect—expressions which we think too well of Prof. N. to believe he can reflect upon hereafter with any other emotions than shame and regret. As a specimen of these, we need only mention that he speaks of a highly respectable writer in our work, as an “anonymous scribbler without TRUTH and without SHAME;” and treats him as so utterly abandoned, that “he (the Reviewer) or any other writer of a similar character, is *obviously* not to be TRUSTED to make ASSERTIONS without the *salutary dread of an answer upon his mind.*” Our readers will be amused to learn that these



and similar expressions are the offspring of entire calmness and self-possession ; since Prof. N. says in express terms of our Review, "it is one which is not likely to affect my character or my peace." If such be the overflowings of his mind in its *peaceful* moods, it would be a curious spectacle to see him for once seriously angry. In that case, acting as he appears to do by the rule of contraries, we might expect that "the tempest and whirlwind" of his passion would be expressed in the language and deportment of a gentleman.

In requesting or rather demanding the insertion of his letter, Prof. N. has treated the Conductors of the Christian Spectator, not as men who are influenced by a sense of honour, or integrity, or christian feeling, but as governed by no higher motives than the sordid considerations of interest and fear. "If you do not insert it in your work," (he says,) "I shall take every other means to give it publicity—it will probably find its way to many of your readers, and they will receive it with an impression particularly unfavourable to yourself and your cause." This passage is explained by another. "I expect" (he says) "the whole of the letter to be inserted without omission or alteration." He is not satisfied with attempting to intimidate us into submission, but to render the humiliation more complete, he would compel us to publish the very terms of intimidation and reproach by which it was effected ; that the world may know that we were influenced by no sense of justice or generosity in granting his request ; but solely by the dread of his displeasure. Of such treatment there can be but one opinion among high-minded men of every sect and party. Prof. N. himself could not expect us to submit to this haughty dictation, without regarding us as abandoned to a sense of character. Serious as the alternative is, we must therefore prepare ourselves with becoming fortitude to meet the fearful consequences of his anger.

But although Professor Norton has by this treatment forfeited all claim to our indulgence, it shall still, as we stated before, be with him alone to decide whether his communication is inserted or not. Let him act by that rule whose authority he will not call in question—let him address the Conductors of the Christian Spectator in terms which he would willingly see applied to himself in the Christian Disciple, and his letter shall be promptly inserted. But if he rejects this proposal (for whose fairness we appeal to every candid man of his own party) and chooses to adopt some other mode of making public his communication, let him not intimate in doing it, that this step became necessary except by his own choice, for the intimation will not be true.

We shall add a single remark as to the subject in debate. We understand Professor Norton, in his Tract, to impute to Calvinists

the doctrine (which he states more explicitly in his letter,) that "God creates men with a nature which necessarily makes them objects of his vengeance." Or to divide the proposition.

I. That God creates a *sinful* nature in men.

H. "That this nature necessarily (i. e. by a *physical necessity*,) makes them the objects of his vengeance."

That he speaks of a *physical* necessity Professor N. will undoubtedly admit, for the subsequent sentence ascertains his meaning. "If as moral agents *they can do nothing to deliver themselves from his curse, &c.*" Such language can be applied to nothing but a necessity which is strictly physical. To speak thus of beings who transgress and suffer only of their *free choice*, would be a contradiction in terms. Nor could any man brand such a doctrine as "blasphemy." Such then are the sentiments (as explained and confirmed in his letter,) which Professor Norton attributes to Calvinists in his Tract. Now to the Question. Does Calvin or the Westminster confession inculcate these doctrines?

I. "God creates a *sinful* nature in men." So far is Calvin from maintaining this position, that he disclaims and rejects it in the most pointed terms. In his chapter on Original sin (Inst. Lib. II, cap. 1.) he spends two sections out of eleven in making this disclaimer. The very design of these sections is to oppose those, "who dare to charge God with their corruptions." (Sect. 10. 11.) "They falsely seek for the work of God," he says, "in their own pollution." "Wherefore let us remember that our fall must be imputed to a corruption of nature that we may not bring an accusation against God himself, the author of nature." "It arises not from *creation*, but the corruption of nature, that men being enslaved by sin can will nothing but what is evil." Inst. Lib. II, cap. v, sect. 1. "I ask what excuse can he plead, seeing that he cannot impute the hardness of his heart to *any one but himself*." Do. Lib. II. cap. v, section 5. "Thus" he concludes, "vanishes the false and nugatory system of the Manicheans, who having imagined in man a *substantial weakness* (*substantialem malitiam*,)\* presumed to invent for him another Creator, that they might not appear to assign *the cause and origin of evil*, to a righteous God." With this accords his comment on Eph. ii, 3. "Since God" he says, "is the author of nature, how is *He* absolved from guilt if men are naturally in a state of ruin? I answer, nature is two fold, the first from God, the second from Man's corruption. The condemnation spoken of by Paul, is by no means derived from God, but from our depraved nature ;

\* By this term Calvin evidently means, a depravity created in the *substance* of man's body or soul.



since we are not born such beings as Adam was created in the beginning, but are the corrupt descendants of a degenerate and polluted parent." The Westminster confession, in like manner, denies that God is made the Author of sin by their creed, (chap. 3.) and attributes our depraved nature to our first parents from whom "it is conveyed to all their posterity, descending to them by ordinary generation." (Chap. 6.) Professor N. may exclaim, that all this is unphilosophical, and contradictory, and if he please, "atheistical." But these are not the points in question. He has stated the doctrine of Calvin to be "that God has so formed men that they are by nature wholly inclined to all evil." Calvin on the other hand repeatedly says God has *not* so formed them;—that "*their condemnation is by no means derived from God.*" On the same point later Calvinists are equally explicit. "To suppose, (says Dr. Ridgeley) that it (the soul) is created by God impure or with an inclination or propensity to sin, cannot well be reconciled with the holiness of God."\* President Edwards likewise says, "there is not the least need of supposing any evil quality *infused, implanted or wrought* into the nature of man by any positive cause or influence whatever, either from God or the creature; or of supposing that man is conceived or born with a *fountain of evil* in his heart, such as any thing properly *positive*."† All this may fill Professor N. with astonishment. He may again ask how can this be consistent, &c. &c. &c. But the question is not the consistency, but the *fact*, "what did these writers believe and teach?" To reject their most solemn declarations on this subject, is a baseness we would not think of charging on Professor N.; and yet if this be not done, does he not stand before the public, convicted of misrepresentation?

II. "This nature *necessarily* (i. e. by a physical necessity) makes them objects of his (God's) vengeance." Such is the second part of Professor N.'s statement of the doctrines of Calvinists. We have already shown that a physical necessity must be here meant, otherwise the inference of Professor N. in the context falls to the ground. What then does Calvin hold on this point? "But if any one should ask them whether God is not necessarily good, and whether the devil is not necessarily evil, what answer would they make? For there is such a close connexion between the goodness of God and his divinity, that his deity is not more necessary than his goodness. But if any one should sacrilegiously object that little praise is due to God for his goodness, which he is constrained to preserve; shall we not reply that his inability to do evil arises from his infinite goodness and

\* Body of Divinity, I, 341. † Treatise on Original sin, Part. 4, chap. 1.

not from violence? Wherefore if a necessity of doing well, impairs not the *liberty of the divine will* in doing well, if the devil who cannot but do evil, nevertheless sins voluntarily, who then will assert that man sins less *voluntarily*, because he is under a necessity of sinning.\* With all his singular notions of Calvin, Professor N. will hardly charge that writer with maintaining that God acts by a *physical* necessity; and he cannot therefore but acknowledge that in the view of Calvin "men are" not "by their nature necessarily (i. e. by a physical necessity) made the objects of divine vengeance." It is by a *moral* necessity alone, according to this statement, that God is good or that man is evil. Many other passages of the same import might be cited. But why then does Calvin contend so warmly against man's "freedom of will." The mistake on this subject arises, we apprehend, from a change of metaphysical terms since his time. "The freedom of will," against which Calvin contended, as we learn from his own statement,† was a kind of self determining power which was asserted by his opponents—a sovereignty of the will by which it rises above the power of motive or inclination and arbitrarily selects what it chooses.‡ Such a freedom of will destroys all notions of moral necessity either in God or man; and would indeed destroy all *moral character* in any being, no less effectually than physical necessity: it has therefore been long exploded by sound philosophy. We do not indeed apprehend that all Calvin's views of metaphysical subjects were either clear or correct. His was not the age of philosophical precision. His system of theology was derived chiefly from the Scriptures. In adapting it to the received system of philosophy at his time, he sometimes erred: and many who followed him became still more erroneous. Neither in metaphysics nor in theology do we call him or any man Master. But he was very far from maintaining those blasphemous doctrines which are so often attributed to him by ignorant or designing men. As to the Westminster divines, we need hardly add, that their ninth chapter commences in these words, "God

\* Inst. Lib. II, cap. iii, sect. 5.

† Inst. Lib. II, cap. 11, sect. 7.

‡ Calvin maintains that there is in man a strong tendency to evil, which he denominates a *bondage* to sin; as we say the drunkard is a *slave* to his appetite, and the passionate man to his anger. He would not therefore admit that beings who are in this sense *slaves* of sin could be called *free*. But he totally disclaims the doctrine of a *physical* necessity. "Man does evil voluntarily and not by constraint." (Lib. II, cap. 11, sect. 7.) And in the next preceding section but one, he mentions "freedom from necessity," or as he chooses to call it "freedom from coercion," as belonging to man in his fallen state. The word necessity he prefers to use in the sense of President Edwards to denote *moral certainty* or fixed disposition.



hath endued the mind of man with that *natural* liberty that it is neither forced nor by any *absolute necessity of nature* determined to good or evil." The inability afterwards spoken of, cannot therefore be physical necessity, but what is now termed moral inability. So little support do we here find for the statement which Professor N. has put into their mouths, that "God creates men with a nature which necessarily (in the physical sense) makes them objects of his vengeance!" Here again it will be in vain to shift the question, and contend that there is no distinction between physical and moral ability or inability. That is not the point at issue. Did Calvin or the Westminster Divines mean to inculcate any *necessity* which destroys or impairs the entire liberty and accountability of men; or makes God in the least degree the author of their transgressions? Both reply that they never did—that they abhor the suggestion. Suppose then their philosophy should be proved incorrect, would this impair their solemn declarations as to what they believed and taught? If not, then is not Professor N. again convicted of misrepresentation?

We have shown therefore that neither Calvin nor the Westminster Divines, (and we may add, *no Calvinist* within our knowledge) believed or taught the existence of such beings as Professor N. has described, "men with a nature which necessarily (in the physical sense) makes them the object of his (God's) vengeance." It is a chimera of his own imagination, to be found only in the region described by the Poet, where dwell "Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things." To apply the doctrines of election or future punishment to such beings would be trifling indeed. In those doctrines we firmly believe. But we believe in them only in reference to beings for whom the Saviour has died; who have as complete liberty of choice and action as God himself; and who if they perish, will perish solely in consequence of their own act and not by the act of God. In supporting these doctrines we ask only a fair statement, and we fear not for the consequences.

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Upon this article from the Spectator, I shall now make a few remarks.

The first part of it, it will be perceived, contains the reasons, why the conductors of the Spectator have refused to publish the letter offered by me. I certainly did not ask for the insertion of this letter in their work as a favor to myself, but principally to show my readiness to meet them on the ground most advantageous to them; and consequently my full assurance of the

correctness of the statements which I had made. If I were wrong, and they or their reviewer were right, it was impossible for me to afford them a fairer opportunity of establishing the fact. I did think, as I still think, that in honour and justice, the conductors of the Spectator could not decline inserting the communication; but whether they complied with a claim so founded, was, of course, more their concern than mine. They do wrong however, in saying that I did not appeal to these considerations, which I have twice expressly brought into view in my letter.

These gentlemen complain of the asperity of my language. In replying to a charge, very grave in its own nature, and urged against me without regard to truth or common decency, I, to be sure, did not think it necessary to avoid all expression of displeasure; or to keep out of view the opinion which I must, necessarily, have of the character of their reviewer, and of the editor, who admitted such communications into his work. I say the editor, for I did not then know, that beside the reviewer, there was more than one other person responsible. They call upon me to treat them, as I would expect to be treated myself. But in doing this, they misunderstand the rule of equity to which they refer. A calumniator, and those who countenance him, must not expect, conformably to this rule, to receive the same treatment, as that to which other men are fairly entitled. Viewing the case in this light, I believe no reader will think there is ground to charge me with undue severity of language. I do not, in my defence, ask to have my language compared with that either of their review or their notice. If my expressions be not justifiable in themselves considered, it would be a poor consolation to me, that I had written with more propriety than the reviewer or the conductors of the Christian Spectator.

Such, however, as my communication was, these 'high-minded gentlemen' could not submit to insert it without being 'abandoned to a sense of character.' *Abandoned to a sense of character!* It is a humble labor to be engaged in controversy with men, who cannot write our language with common correctness. But it may be a useful labor, and therefore I submit to it. My object, however, in that communication, as far as it regarded their reviewer, was to prove (in my own defence,) and not to assert, that he had written 'without truth and without shame.' If they will publish the proof of this fact, they may suppress the assertion, or what they have chosen to regard as such. My communication, they say, shall be inserted, whenever to use their language, 'it is purged of reproachful and menacing expressions.' I give them now full liberty to strike out every thing which they



may fancy can be thus described; and call upon them in return to perform the promise which they have thus publicly made. I am not aware what plea they will now resort to in order to evade its performance; but if any reader expect that my communication will, in consequence, actually be inserted in the Spectator, I can only say, that I hope he will not be disappointed.

The latter part of their article is of more importance. With notions of decency, corresponding to all which I have had occasion to observe in their work, its conductors undertake to reply to a communication which they suppress. They conceive me, they say, to have imputed to Calvinists two doctrines.

1. 'That God creates a sinful nature in men.'

2. 'That this nature necessarily (i. e. by a *physical necessity*) makes them the objects of his vengeance.'

With regard to the first doctrine, I have not used the words there given; and in complaining of misrepresentation on my part, they ought to have produced the exact words of which they complain; and to have been very accurate in quoting my language. I have no objection however to adopt their language, except its inaccuracy and obscurity. Though I have not before used these precise words, I now affirm it to be a doctrine of Calvinism, that *God creates men with a sinful nature*. There are but two questions which can arise respecting this proposition; one, 'whether God be the creator of men;' and the other 'whether their nature be sinful.' I have abundantly proved the affirmative of the last question to be a doctrine of Calvinism. The pretended defenders of this system, therefore, in refusing to recognize the doctrine, that God creates men with a sinful nature, have no other resource but to deny that God is the creator of men.

But the conductors of the Spectator produce passages from Calvin, and the Westminster Confession, and Edwards, which they would have it believed are inconsistent with this doctrine. Without any examination of these passages, I might say that perhaps they are so. It is not my business to reconcile the contradictions, or explain the absurdities of Calvinistic writers. I have never had any doubt, that such contradictions and absurdities might be found in abundance in their works. It is not my business to show, what I believe to be altogether false, that their system is consistent either with itself, or with those first principles of reason and religion, which they are sometimes compelled to recognize. It is not therefore by bringing passages, which may appear to be irreconcilable with the doctrines I have stated, that these doctrines can be proved not to be a part of the system. This could be proved, only by showing what it is

impossible to show, that the authorities, I have quoted, do not fully and clearly establish my positions. Amid all the discordant propositions of Calvinistic writers, the fundamental doctrines, the great features of the system, are clearly distinguishable. It is in the attempts which have been made to reconcile them with the first principles and undisputed truths of religion, that the inconsistency of which I speak principally appears. But there are here two things to be attended to; first, that this inconsistency appears for the most part, not in what is actually said, but in the fair and necessary inference from what is said; and, secondly, that this inference however fair or necessary would not be acknowledged by the writer himself. He would not, in consequence, abandon the doctrine, to which it is opposed, and which in the very act of falling into this contradiction, he is endeavouring to defend.

It would, I confess, be a strange thing, if Calvin, or the Westminster Divines, or Edwards, had any where *expressly* contradicted the doctrines of their creed; and of consequence, if any express contradiction was to be found of those passages which I have produced from their writings, in which these doctrines are stated. None such has been brought forward by the conductors of the Spectator. The whole amount of the passages from Calvin, quoted or referred to by them, is that 'God is not to be charged with the sins of men, as morally accountable for them.' I have not stated it to be a doctrine of Calvinism, 'that God is morally accountable for the sins of men;' and there is therefore no contradiction between Calvin and myself. It may be an unavoidable inference from his system, but it is one, not to be found in any Calvinistic authority; and I therefore have not affirmed it to be a part of the Calvinistic creed. Calvin inveighs against those who 'dare to charge God with their corruptions,' or sins. The conductors of the Spectator, it seems, would have their readers infer, that if 'God creates men with a nature wholly inclined to all evil' men may justly charge God with their sins. The inference may be perfectly obvious and correct; but it is not one which Calvin admitted; it is the very inference against which he is contending. The contradiction which exists is between Calvin and themselves, not between Calvin and me. Calvin, in treating of 'the slavery of the human will,' '*de humani arbitrii servitute*,' expressly denies that 'sin ought the less to be imputed to men, because it is necessary;' i. e. by the constitution of their nature. 'Si peccatum aīunt, necessitatis est, jam desinit esse peccatum \* \* \* Nego peccatum ideo minus debere imputari quod necessarium est.' (Institut. Lib. II. C. v. § 1.)



From the very section, however, that I have just quoted, the conductors of the Spectator adduce a passage, which taken without reference to its connexion, and in the manner in which they have marked it with italics, is adapted to convey a false impression. It is the following.

‘It arises not from *creation*, but the corruption of nature, that men being enslaved by sin can will nothing but what is evil.’

It is only necessary to observe, that it is not the creation of men individually, which is here spoken of by Calvin, but the creation of Adam in a pure and holy state from which he fell. The human race are regarded by Calvin, collectively, as suffering for what was done by Adam, their *federal head*, (to borrow an expression from the technical language of the system,) the representative of all mankind. With him, it is taught, God entered into a covenant, the terrible penalties for the breach of which were, through him as a ‘public person,’ incurred equally by all his descendants, as by himself.\* His fall has rendered it just in God to condemn all his descendants to corruption, sin, and eternal misery. This is the despicable subterfuge, which is resorted to by Calvin and his followers, to vindicate the ways of God, and to prove, not that God does not now create men with a sinful nature; but that it is just in him to do so, and that he is not accountable for their sins. I will quote from Calvin a little more than the conductors of the Spectator have done, giving what stands in connexion with the passage they have adduced; and I too will put a few words in Italics.

‘If any one will dispute with God, and attempt to evade his judgment by *this pretext, that he could not have acted otherwise than he has done*, God has this answer ready, which we have elsewhere adduced, that it arises not from the creation, but from the corruption of human nature, that *men being enslaved to sin can will nothing but what is evil*. For whence proceeds that impotence, which the wicked are so ready to bring forward as a pretext, *but from this, that Adam voluntarily devoted himself to the service of the devil?* Hence that corruption by whose chains we are held bound; *because the first man revolted from his maker*. If all men are justly regarded as guilty of this revolt; let them not think themselves excused by necessity.’

\* ‘The covenant being made with Adam, as a public person, not for himself only, but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation sinned in him, and fell with him in that first transgression.’ Westminster Assembly’s Larger Catechism.

The passage found in Calvin's commentary on Ephes. II. 3. from which the conductors of the Spectator detach some expressions, is in its true meaning, and bearing, just as much to my purpose, and just as little to theirs, as the passage last quoted. The words of the text, as they stand in our Common Version, it will be recollected, are these: '*we were by nature the children of wrath even as others.*'\* Upon this text, Calvin observes, that by 'children of wrath' is meant nothing else than 'ruined, worthy of eternal death,' that it is equivalent to '*condemned before God, coram Deo damnati.*' It is a remarkable passage he says against the Pelagians. 'Paul bears testimony that WE ARE BORN WITH SIN, as serpents bring their poison with them from the womb.' 'Where there is *condemnation*, there must of necessity be sin, because God is angry not with innocent men, but with sin.' Upon this, he says, a question may arise; 'how seeing that God is the author of nature, he can be without blame, if we are ruined by nature?' 'I answer' he says, 'that there are two kinds of nature, the first was originally made by God, the second is the corruption of the former. The *condemnation*, therefore, of which Paul speaks, by no means flows from God; but from a depraved nature, because we are not now born as Adam was created in the beginning; but are an adulterate seed from a degenerate and corrupt man.'

What is to be inferred from the confused and unmeaning attempt to say something in the face of common sense, with which Calvin concludes this passage? Is he shrinking from his favourite doctrine, as the conductors of the Spectator would have it believed? Certainly not; he is endeavouring to defend it. He states his doctrine in the most explicit terms, that we are now 'born with sin, *nos cum peccato gigni,*' as serpents bring their poison with them into the world. If it can be proved to be a doctrine of Calvinism, that we, the descendants of Adam, are not born as God has formed us, or in other words, that men are not now created by God, I will readily admit, that it is not a doctrine of Calvinism, 'that men are created by God with sinful natures.'

\* The proper meaning of these words I conceive to be this: 'We were by nature as much exposed to punishment as the rest of men:' that is, we, Jewish Christians (of whom St. Paul is here speaking, in contradistinction to the Gentile converts whom he is addressing) had no peculiar claim to the favour of God, on account of our natural descent from Abraham and the other patriarchs. That the Jews believed they had a special right to the favour of God, merely on this ground, appears from the scriptures, the Rabbinical writings, and from other sources of evidence. This opinion is alluded to by John the Baptist, when he says: 'Think not to say within yourselves, we are Abraham's children.'



In another passage, adduced by the conductors of the *Spectator*, Calvin endeavours, as he often did, to distinguish his system from that of the Manichæans. It would not be easy fully to explain the passage without giving some account of the latter system. I believe, it is not necessary to add any thing in relation to it to the remarks already made. I notice it principally for the sake of observing, that there is what I presume to be an error of the press in one of the words put in italics;—the word printed ‘weakness’ ought to be ‘wickedness.’ I believe it is unnecessary, likewise, to say any thing further respecting the few words quoted from the Westminster Confession, and the reference to that work.

The conductors of the *Spectator* give also a quotation from Edwards. What were the notions of this writer respecting the nature with which men are created, fully appears from the extracts adduced by me. In the part of his work on Original Sin, from which the few words in the *Spectator* are taken, he is disposed to maintain this theory—that the natural will, powers and faculties of man are so prone to all evil, that they can be restrained from it only by the supernatural operation of the spirit of God; and that it is therefore in consequence of God’s withholding this supernatural grace, that men are sinners, and not in consequence of what Edwards calls any *positive* cause or influence from him, ‘Thus man,’ he says, ‘was left in a state of darkness, woeful corruption, and ruin, nothing but flesh without spirit.’ The doctrine of Edwards is that men, as created by God, have natures so corrupt, that it is not necessary for him to exert any positive influence to make them sinners, or to infuse into their natures any new principle of evil. There is nothing in this statement, I believe, inconsistent with the quotations which I have before given from this writer.

With regard to Ridgeley, the author of a system of divinity, a writer of no note or authority, the passage quoted from him certainly appears to be Anti-calvinistic. I have not taken the trouble to examine its connexion, and ascertain whether this arise from ignorance of the proper use of language, or from any other cause. I do not even know whether Ridgeley himself did or did not pretend to be a Calvinist; and though the question might easily be settled, it is not worth the labour of half an hour that might be required to settle it. If he called himself a Calvinist, it is not from such authorities that we are to learn what Calvinism is. He might, for any thing I know, have been as ignorant on the subject, as the conductors of the *Christian Spectator* are, or appear to be.

With regard to the second proposition ascribed to me; I have implied it in my letter to be a doctrine of Calvinism, that 'God creates men with a nature which necessarily makes them objects of his vengeance.' The conductors of the Spectator profess to understand me as saying, that God creates men with a nature which, by a *physical necessity*, makes them objects of his vengeance, by causing them to fall into actual sins. A physical necessity they say, I must mean; and if they do not understand me as meaning a necessity which is the cause of men's actual sins, their remarks have no sort of bearing on the proposition imputed to me. But in my letter, I have proved it to be a doctrine of Calvinism, that men from their very nature, without reference to any actual sins, are odious in the sight of God, and objects of his vengeance; that their very nature necessarily makes or causes them to be so; and I have illustrated this doctrine by the case of infants, who before any actual sins, are according to the express assertions of Calvin and Edwards, and the implied doctrine of the Westminster Divines, subjects of damnation. After having shown this to be an article of the Calvinistic faith, I begin the next paragraph with the hypothetical statement of it.\* The conductors of the Spectator have not attended to the facts which I have established in my letter. If these gentlemen really know nothing of the system, they have undertaken to defend, but what has been taught them in this controversy, I wish at least that they would read and endeavour to understand the statements and proofs which I have laid before them.

It is, however, a doctrine of Calvinism, that the actual sins of men are the *necessary* consequence of the corrupt nature of man. The conductors of the Spectator have understood me as affirming this proposition; and to the proposition, considered in itself, they obviously have nothing to object. They themselves say, that according to Calvin: 'It is by a *moral necessity*,' that 'God is good, or that *man is evil*.' They are obviously believers of what is called the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity. They will not therefore deny it to be their belief, that the actions of men are determined by a moral necessity; that is, a necessity arising from the moral constitution of their nature, as acted upon by the motives presented to it. What then is their objection to the proposition ascribed to me? Why they say, that though the actions of men are necessary; yet I must have meant that, according to the system of Calvinism, they are determined by a '*physical necessity*.' This, to be sure, in the sense in which '*physical*

\* See p. 258.



*necessity*' seems to be understood by them, would have been a most extraordinary statement on my part; for they mean, if they mean any thing by this term, a necessity controlling men's actions in opposition to their volitions. What then is the ground of ascribing to me a statement, which on the face of it is incredible I should have made. The answer is, that I must have meant 'a *physical* necessity;' because a little after, I state hypothetically the proposition, as a doctrine of Calvinism, that 'men, as *moral agents*, can do nothing to deliver themselves from the curse of God.' This is the Calvinistic doctrine of the *moral inability* of man 'to have or do any good thing.' Now though I have been unnecessarily accurate in the hypothetical statement of this doctrine; though to exclude all pretence for misrepresentation, I have introduced the words '*as moral agents*;' yet on the ground of this sentence solely, the conductors of the Spectator, charge me with affirming not a *moral*, but a *physical* necessity. It is impossible, here, to suspect any dishonest artifice. The inference actually made by them, is too plainly the direct opposite of that which they ought to have made, for any one to imagine them to have reasoned in this manner, with an intention of misrepresenting or deceiving. It is an honest blunder, without doubt, though a very gross one; and such being the case, one ought to be very tender in charging the conductors of the Spectator with intentional misrepresentation, whatever strange accounts they may hereafter give of the opinions or statements of any writer. It is possible, for instance, that they may really have misunderstood Calvin, when they pretend, as they do in their last note, that he maintained 'freedom from necessity' to belong to man in his fallen state; though Calvin in the chapter from which they quote, repeats over and over again, expressions like the following, that 'man is hemmed in on every side by a wretched necessity, *miserrima undique necessitate circumseptus*;' and though the very title of the chapter is, that 'man is despoiled of liberty of will, and subjected to a miserable servitude.'

One main purpose of the latter part of their notice is evidently to inculcate the doctrine, that, though what they call a physical necessity would destroy moral accountability, yet a moral necessity does not;—so that though man by nature is 'utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that is spiritually good, and inclined to all evil, and that continually;' yet that on this account, he is not at all less 'justly liable to all punishments in this world and in that to come,' for not doing what by nature he is disabled from doing. I have never denied this to be a doctrine of Calvinism. On the contrary, I affirm it to be so.

There are some expressions in their notice which have nothing to do with the present controversy, but by which many of their readers may be liable to be deceived. They speak of men as 'beings who transgress and suffer only of their *free choice*;' and as not being subject to 'any necessity which destroys or impairs their entire liberty.' It is their business, certainly not mine, to reconcile these expressions with the statements respecting the nature and condition of man, which I have adduced from Calvinistic authorities. The fact is, that the conductors of the *Spectator* have indulged in rather a licentious use of the freedom, which some modern defenders of the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity have assumed, of employing certain terms in a technical and deceptive sense, wholly foreign from their popular acceptation. When for instance, it is said that the actions of men are free, nothing more is meant, than that man has the natural power to act conformably to his volitions, that is, if he wills to exert his body or his mind, he is able to do it; there is no compulsion exercised upon him to prevent it. But it is maintained at the same time, that every act of his will is *necessarily* determined to be what it is, by his own nature and the constitution of things which God has appointed. With regard to the implied proposition, that men 'transgress, and suffer only of their free choice,' the conductors of the *Spectator* have asserted what neither the doctrines of their professed creed, (if they claim to be Calvinists,) nor the language of their professed philosophy (if they think themselves necessarians) will either warrant or excuse.

What Calvin thought of the language which has been used by modern necessarians, may be learnt from an *honest* passage, which I am about to quote. With regard to the particular expression just noticed, it will be perceived, as before, that the conductors of the *Spectator* contradict his authority; and that there is no contradiction between Calvin and myself. The object of the second chapter of the second book of his *Institutes*, as stated in its title, is, as I have said, to prove, that 'man in his present state is despoiled of freedom of will; and subjected to a miserable slavery.' He quotes and opposes the opinions of different writers, who thought that freedom of will, might in one sense or another be ascribed to man, and finally mentions that of Peter Lombard. Lombard he says, 'decides that our will is free, not because we are equally able to do or to think what is good or what is evil; but only because we are free from compulsion (*coactione soluti sumus*;) which liberty may exist, notwithstanding we are corrupted, and are slaves of sin, and can do nothing but sin.'



Upon this Calvin immediately remarks :

‘According to this, man will be said to possess freedom of will, NOT BECAUSE HE HAS A FREE CHOICE EQUALLY OF GOOD AND EVIL, but because he does evil conformably to his will and not by compulsion. This is very true ; but what purpose was to be answered by giving so proud a title to a thing of so little importance? *An admirable kind of liberty indeed, if man be under no compulsion to serve sin, but is yet such a willing slave, that his will is held bound by the fetters of sin.* I abominate disputes about words, by which the Church is disturbed without any good result ; but *I think we ought religiously to avoid those words which appear to express an absurdity ; especially on a subject respecting which there are pernicious errors.* For how many are there, I pray, who when they hear freedom of will ascribed to man, do not immediately conceive of him, as master of his own mind and will, so as to be able to direct himself to either side, [either good or evil ?] But, it may be said, that this danger will be removed, if the common people are carefully informed of the sense in which the term is used. This is not true ; the human mind is of itself so prone to false opinions, that it will more readily imbibe error from a single word, than truth from a long discourse.’

Such was the opinion of Calvin concerning that abuse of language to which modern necessarians have resorted ; and so far was he from thinking with the conductors of the Spectator, that men ‘transgress, and suffer only of their free choice.’

In relation to this subject, the conductors of the Spectator bring forward a single passage from the Westminster Confession, as follows :

‘God hath indued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to do good or evil.’

If it had been their object to show what the Westminster Divines really believed respecting the nature of man, it would have been a little more to the purpose, to have quoted the next proposition but one to that given by them.

‘Man by his fall into a state of sin hath *wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation ;* so as a natural man being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself or to prepare himself thereunto.’

It must be an affair, I think, of some deliberation and difficulty for them to reconcile the meaning which they wish their readers to receive from the first proposition, with what is so broadly and explicitly stated in the last. The opinion which the

Westminster divines intended to express respecting 'the natural liberty of the will,' was, I presume, the same which Calvin has quoted from Lombard.

The controversy between the conductors of the *Spectator* and myself is now, I suspect, at an end. The point at issue, it will be recollected is, whether in the passage originally quoted from me in the *Spectator*, I have misstated the doctrines of Calvinism. The conductors of that work, I am convinced, are too honest to continue to urge a charge, which they find themselves wholly unable to support by any proof or any plausible pretence. They have in fact virtually abandoned it in their notice of my letter; since their remarks are principally founded upon a sentence of that letter; and not upon the paragraph originally objected to. To this very sentence, understood in its obvious sense, they clearly have nothing to object; and their reply is directed only against a most singular misapprehension which they have formed of its meaning. I do not intend to say, however, that they will not probably continue to write. They may complain once more of the harshness of my language; and bring forward new specimens of the propriety and decorum of their own by way of contrast. They will hardly charge me again with being wholly unacquainted with Calvinistic authorities; but they may express their admiration at my ignorance, in knowing so little of such a famous and valuable book, as Ridgeley's *Body of Divinity*. They may endeavour to establish the fact, that Calvin did not understand his own opinions; and really believed at heart, that man was free to choose between good and evil. They may run through the whole series of quibbles, which has been taught them in the necessarian school of Edwards. They may entirely change their ground and attempt to defend the doctrines which they have heretofore disowned. Or they may bring forward their own peculiar opinions, remote enough from Calvinism, it is very likely, though hardly, I suspect, more consistent or rational, and may accuse me of misrepresenting these; as if this were the question at issue, or as if in writing the paragraph of which their reviewer complained, I had ever thought or heard of the conductors of the *Christian Spectator*. But the original charge against me, I have no doubt, will be silently abandoned. I believe they will do every thing in their power to keep it out of sight, and to have it forgotten. It would be fairer, it is true, expressly to retract it. But this is more perhaps than can be reasonably expected from them; and they ought not to be defrauded of their due praise, if they should only pursue the course, I have supposed, and thus manifest their desire to withdraw it from public attention.



## ON THE CONNEXION BETWEEN SACRED POETRY AND SACRED MUSIC.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

IN the Christian Disciple for March and April, 1821, was published a communication on *the requisite qualities of a good collection of Psalms and Hymns for public worship*. It attracted some attention at the time, and has since been more than once referred to in the numbers of this work. To most of the suggestions therein made, I presume no objection has ever been offered. Indeed they are too obviously just and important to admit of any. The remark, however, on which the writer dwelt longest, and to which he seemed to attach chief value, which in fact is substantially a novel proposition, has been spoken of as visionary, fanciful, and quaint, and apparently rejected without fair examination. The remark was this: *There should, if possible, be a perfect uniformity in the structure of the several verses intended to be sung together;—an exact coincidence between the emphases of one verse and those of every other; so that every tune, which is well suited to one verse, may not in point of rhythm or emphatic modulation, be unsuitable for any other*. Some have said that they do not understand this, and many perhaps may doubt the possibility of accomplishing the object here stated. In my view it appears perfectly intelligible and possible. I should not however have recalled attention to the subject, were it not that I have lately met with a Hymn in the Springfield Liberal Recorder, in which the principles of this writer are fully illustrated. It is a chaste and correct specimen of devotional poetry, and will gratify those who have no faith in the scheme on which it is built.

## HYMN.

*On Divine Wisdom.—TUNE, Psalm 97.*

Now to the Lord, our God, we raise  
 Anthems of glory—shouts of praise;  
 Wisdom, and truth, and power unknown,  
 With beams of light invest his throne.

Wisdom array'd the worlds on high—  
 Balanc'd the planets—spread the sky;  
 Taught them to move in endless rounds,  
 And gave revolving years their bounds.

Nor do the heavens alone reveal  
 Wonders of wisdom—boundless skill :  
 Creatures on EARTH in various ways  
 Display their wise Creator's praise.

Wisdom design'd my living frame—  
 Moulded and fashion'd all I am ;  
 Made me to see, and hear, and move,  
 And speak, and think, and fear, and love.

Prone, as we are, to go astray,  
 Wisdom unerring guides our way ;  
 Points to a world of endless joys,  
 And still the hand and soul employs.

Lord—thou art God—the only wise ;  
 O, may thy wonders charm our eyes :  
 Help us to learn and do thy will,  
 Secure in thee from every ill.

The plan quoted above is completely and successfully executed in this Hymn. Each stanza is cast in the same mould with every other. There is a correspondent accent, rhythm and emphasis in each. If you find a tune, the accent and rhythm of which correspond with those of any one of these verses, they will equally correspond with those of the other verses. What has thus been done in this instance, is equally capable of being done in other instances. Whether it be possible so to vary the hymns now in use, that they shall be conformed to this rule, I do not pretend to determine ; though I am persuaded that many of them would require few alterations, and those but slight.

The improvement which would thus be introduced into the practice of psalmody, will be very apparent to any one, who will sing the hymn we have just quoted, in the tune for which it was written. He will be sensible of a correspondence between the sound and the sense, a united flow of melody and meaning, and consequently a smoothness, pleasure, and satisfaction which he rarely experiences throughout an equal number of connected stanzas. He will be more sensible of this if he will afterward try the same hymn in some other tune, in which the accents and pauses are differently arranged, as, Nantwich, or Eaton, or Sterling. He will perceive a disagreement, a collision, between the sentiment and its mode of recitation, which renders the whole awkward and embarrassing, very far from the easy and natural expression which was given to it in the first attempt.



By this slight attention to one case, the great object of the proposed rule is clearly and definitely laid before us. All poetry has a certain rhythm and certain accents. All music has a certain rhythm and certain accents. Now the object simply is, whenever we unite poetry with music, to effect a coincidence between these :—not to suffer the rhythm of the one to interfere with and contradict that of the other, nor the accent of one to fall upon an unaccented portion of the other. When this statement is made, there is no one who does not assent to its reasonableness, and who would not pronounce any practice opposite to this perfectly irrational and absurd,—destructive indeed of the main purpose for which music and verse are united. Yet such is our actual practice. We are continually having accent in the music when there is none in the verse, and accent in the verse when there is none in the tune ; pauses also in the line when there are none corresponding in the music, and pauses in the music where there is no suspension of the sense. If one will give attention, he will detect these and similar incongruities every sabbath, which if we were not so familiarly accustomed to them, would be in a high degree distressing and offensive. Whoever will observe them, will be persuaded that he has discovered one of the causes which render our psalmody so little affecting. He will perceive one cause why there are so many songs, the singing of which always produces a thrill of emotion, while the most eloquent and touching psalms so often fall coldly and without effect upon the ears of the hearer. For where the sound contradicts the sentiment, and the train of thought or feeling is interrupted or opposed by false accent or ill-placed emphasis, it is impossible that the force or beauty of the sentiment should be so exhibited as to affect the heart. We could not endure a reader of poetry, who should thus violate propriety and play false with the sense ; we should say that he destroyed the very soul of the piece. Yet this is done more or less in nearly every hymn that is sung—an abuse that would be insufferable, if we had not borne it from our cradles.

The regular verse in which our hymns are written is the iambic ; consisting of syllables alternately accented ; thus :

The heāvens declāre thy glōry Lōrd.

This measure however admits of exceptions ; the most frequent of which is the accent on the first syllable of the line instead of the second ; thus :

Wide as the wōrld is thȳ commānd.

If a minister were to read this and similar lines with an accent on the *second* syllable, or lines similar to that first quoted with

an accent on the *first*; there is no congregation that would endure him. Yet in singing, nothing is more common than this vile sin against sense and taste; and it is the very sin which the proposed rule is designed to remedy.

The value of the principle may be illustrated again, in the case of pauses. In every line both of poetry and music, there is a natural pause—a short, scarcely perceptible stop, which seems to exist necessarily in the nature of things. In the random mode in which hymns and tunes are usually put together, there is always a chance that the musical and metrical cœsura will fall in different places; and this is in fact an evil of frequent occurrence, which, though it may not amount to an absolute disturbance, yet prevents that exactness and perfection which are necessary to bring out the full expression. Any one may see an example of this in the hymn we have quoted. The pause in the second line is a distinct and peculiar one, both in the tune, and in each verse of the hymn. How different would be the effect of these verses, if sung to a tune having the pause of the second line after the fourth instead of the fifth syllable. It is inattention to this circumstance which so often renders the first and third lines of *Arlington*, and the third of *Arundel*, so grating.

There are other pauses, both in verse and music. Some tunes pause at the close of each line. These are hardly suited to express an uninterrupted sense, and should be employed only for hymns whose lines close in a similar manner. Some tunes pause in some part of one of the lines, as *Arundel* and *Carthage* (C. M.) in the fourth line, and Costellow's *Milan* in the first, third, and seventh. Now if a verse have no corresponding pause, it is sadly marred by forcing it into such a tune; especially when, as sometimes must happen, you are compelled to divide an important word. Then in like manner there are pauses in the measure, and you equally ruin the effect by driving hurriedly over these with a tune that will not stop for the sense. Yet if every verse be not moulded on the same model, so as to create a similar pause in each, it is plain that this incongruity will inevitably exist; since the tune which is excellently fitted to express the sentiment of one stanza, will be, for that very reason, equally fitted to destroy the sense of another.

These are mere hints. I could enlarge and add to them, almost indefinitely, and strengthen their force by examples without number. I have said enough however, I trust, to show that the principle contended for is not only capable of vindication, but is an important one, the neglect of which has been cause of serious evils. If suitable occasion should offer, I may hereafter add to these remarks.

ARISTIDES.



## MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER ON UNIFORMITY IN RELIGION, BY  
ROBERT ROBINSON.

MAKE religion what you will ; let it be speculation, let it be practice ; make it faith, make it fancy ; let it be reason, let it be passion ; let it be what you will, *Uniformity* in it is not to be expected. Philosophy is a stranger to it, and christianity disowns it.

A philosopher holds that the system of the Universe is perfect ; that the duty and glory of man is to follow, not force, nature ; that moral philosophy is nothing but a harmony of the world of spirit with the world of matter ; that all the fine descriptions of virtue are nothing but essays on this conformity ; thus he proves that moral evil is the production of natural evil, moral good the production of natural good. A philosopher would say to a legislator, as the poet to a man of taste,

To build, to plant, whatever you intend,  
To rear the column, or the arch to bend,  
To swell the terrace, or to sink the grot,  
In all, let NATURE never be forgot.

Give a philosopher a farm, and injoin him to cultivate it like a philosopher, he will study the soil, the situation, the seasons, and so on, and having comprehended what his farm is capable of, he will improve it accordingly. In the same manner he directs his garden, and every plant in it, never expecting to gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. What would he,—yea, what would the unphilosophized farmers say of *an act for the uniformity of husbandry* ? An act of *Uniformity*, say the honest rustics, what's that ? What's that ! Why, you must grow nothing but wheat. How ! say they, some of our lands are too light, they will produce none ; we can grow rye there indeed ; we have some even not worth ploughing for rye ; however, they will serve for a sheep-walk, or at worst for a rabbit-warren. Thus Nature teaches men to reason, and thus they reason right.

Go a step farther. Make this philosopher a tutor, and commit to his tuition a company of youths ; he will no more think of *uniforming* these young gentlemen, than of teaching his horse to fly, or his parrot to swim. Their geniuses differ, says he, and I must diversify their educations ; Nature has formed this for

elocution, and that for action. And should the blind fondness of parents complain, his answer is ready, *What was I, that I could withstand God?* In short, place such a man in what disinterested sphere you will, and his principles guide his practice—except indeed he should be chosen to represent a county; then probably, not having the fear of philosophy before his eyes, he might vote for an *Act of Uniformity*.

A law that requires uniformity, either requires men to be of *the same sentiments*, or to practise *the same ceremonies*. Now if it should appear that the first is impossible, the last will fall of itself. For then the question will be, Ought two men who confessedly differ in sentiment, to profess that they agree? Ought an honest man to *be* one thing, and *appear* another? Heaven forbid that any should maintain so dangerous a thesis!

You are a man of extensive knowledge, you know the ancient and modern creeds; you remember that Harry the eighth enjoined ‘*all preachers to instruct the people to believe the whole Bible, the three creeds, the Apostle’s, Nicene, and Athanasian, and to interpret all things according to them.*’ You know that in Edward the sixth’s reign, TWO AND FORTY ARTICLES, drawn up by Cranmer and Ridley, were thought necessary to be published, *for the avoiding diversity of opinions, and establishing consent touching true religion*. In the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign, you know, ELEVEN articles were ‘set out by order of both Archbishops, Metropolitans, and the rest of the Bishops, for the unity of Doctrine to be taught and holden of *all* Parsons, Vicars and Curates; as well in testification of their *common consent* in the said doctrine, to the stopping of the mouths of them that go about to slander the ministers of the church for *diversity of judgment,*’ &c. Two years after, all the former were reviewed, and the *whole bible, the three creeds, the two and forty articles, and the eleven articles*, were collected into one aggregate sum, and made THIRTY-NINE. Subscription to these has been essential ever since, which subscription is an *argument* (as his Majesty’s declaration says) *that all clergymen agree in the true, usual, literal meaning of the said articles*.

Whatever be the *true meaning* of these articles, it is not only certain that Clergymen explain, and consequently believe, them in different and even contrary senses; but it is also credible that no thirty-nine articles can be invented by the wit of man, which thirty-nine men can exactly agree in. It is not obstinacy, it is necessity.

Suppose the thirty-nine articles to contain a given number of ideas, and for argument’s sake, suppose that number to be fifty.



Suppose the capacities of men to differ, as they undoubtedly do, and one man's intelligence to be able to comprehend fifty, a second's five hundred, and a third's but five and twenty. The first may subscribe these fifty points of doctrine, but who can confine the genius of the second? Or who can expand the capacity of the last? In minds capable of different operations, no number of points of doctrine can possibly be fixed on as a standard for all, for fix on what number soever you will, there will always be too many for the capacities of some, and for others too few. If this be the case who can establish an uniformity of sentiment? What earthly power can say, '*We will not endure any varying or departing in the least degree?*'

After all, what is uniformity good for? Is it essential to salvation? Is it essential to real piety in this life? Does it make a subject more loyal to his prince? A husband more faithful, or a parent more tender? Can't a man be honest and just in his dealings without knowing any thing about St. Athanasius? Nay, has not this act produced more sophistry and cruelty than any other act of parliament, from the reformation to this day? Not secular but spiritual severity, not the sophistry of the bar but the sophistry of the church.

Did the great Supreme govern his empire by an act of uniformity, men might be damned for believing too little, seraphs degraded for believing too much. The creed of the inhabitants of Saturn might be established, and theirs that dwelt in the Moon only tolerated. In such a case, what a fine field of controversial glory would open to the divines of these two provinces of the kingdom, on the Origin of Evil? Almighty Father, can a blind belief please thee? Can thy creatures believe what they cannot perceive the evidence of? Can all understand the evidence of the same number of truths? Formed with different organs, educated in different prejudices, dost thou require the same services? Art thou indeed the hard master who reapest where thou hast not sowed? Far from all thy subjects be such a thought!

Conclude then, worthy Sir, that if *God be a rock and his work perfect*, if *variety* be the characteristic of all his works, an attempt to establish *uniformity* is reversing and destroying all the creator's glory. To attempt an uniformity of colour, sound, taste, smell, would be a fine undertaking; but what, pray, will you call an attempt to establish *an uniformity of thought?*

## ANTINOMIANISM :—FROM THE LIFE OF THOMAS SCOTT.

THERE was a weekly lecture at the Lock chapel, on the Wednesday evening, which the evening preacher and I were to take alternately. All circumstances considered, I did not expect much usefulness from this service. I therefore intreated the acting governors to allow me, in addition to it, to preach a lecture on the Friday evenings; the service to be altogether my own. This, after some hesitation, was conceded. The congregation, which might be expected to attend, I was aware, was decidedly Calvinistic: but I was fully determined to bring forward at this lecture (which indeed I had desired almost exclusively for that purpose,) every thing, in the most particular manner, relative to the Christian temper and conduct. With this view I formed, as I foolishly thought, a very sagacious plan. I gave notice that I would lecture, in an expository manner, on the Epistle to the Ephesians, in order. At first I was very well attended, my congregation generally consisting of more than three hundred persons. This continued while I was going through the more doctrinal part of the Epistle; though I applied the doctrine very plainly to practical purposes, and often intimated my hope, that I should be favored with equal attention, when I came to speak more particularly on Christian tempers and the relative duties.—*But the Lord took the wise in his own craftiness.* When I arrived at the latter part of the fourth chapter, the alarm was spread, though I stamped every exhortation strongly with an evangelical seal. But at length, when I preached from the fifth chapter, on the words, *See that ye walk circumspectly, &c.*, the charge was every where circulated, that I had changed my principles, and was become an Arminian: and, at once, I irrecoverably lost much above half my audience.—The Sunday morning congregation also greatly decreased: dissatisfaction was manifested in the looks and language of all the acting governors, even such as had been most friendly: and I seemed to have no alternative, but that of either receding voluntarily from my situation, or being disgracefully dismissed.

I had, however, no place to which to retire: every door seemed to be shut against me. On this emergency, amidst very many interruptions, and under inexpressible discouragement, I wrote in the course of a week, and preached on the Sunday morning following, (November 26, 1786,) my sermon on Election and Final Perseverance. By the next week it was printed and ready for sale: and a thousand copies were sold in about three days. A second edition was printed: but the public were saturated, and few copies were disposed of.



While I was preparing this sermon, I dined with rather a large party, many of the company governors of the Lock, and zealous, in their way, for Calvinism. In the evening, it was proposed, according to custom, to discuss some religious subject : and, being really desirous of information, I proposed a question concerning the precise boundaries between Calvinism and Arminianism, respecting which so much prejudice against my ministry had been excited. But *in conference they added nothing unto me* : and, two dissenters excepted, no one offered any thing sufficient to shew that he understood the subject. So that, when I concluded with my own remarks, it was allowed that I was more decidedly Calvinistic than the rest of the company !—This was suited in one way to gratify me : but it was still more calculated to convince me, that I was placed in a most unpromising situation.

I well remember, (says Dr. Scott's son and biographer,) the utter astonishment which my father expressed on returning from the party here alluded to. He had not conceived it possible, that men, known in the religious world, could have allowed themselves boldly to take a side, and to talk loudly in favour of a system, of which they scarcely knew the outlines, and the grounds of which they were not able to explain, still less to defend.—It is much to be hoped, that so instructive a record, as we are now considering, will not have been written in vain. That some, at least, will allow themselves to be put on their guard against being scared by the terror of a mere name ; and will be induced, after the honorable example of the Bereans, to 'search the scriptures,' concerning what they hear, and to ask, not by what distinctive appellation it may be described, but whether it is 'according to the oracles of God' or not.—It is to be hoped, also, that some persons, immersed, perhaps, in secular business, from Monday morning till Saturday night, may be induced to doubt whether they are quite so well qualified to decide upon difficult theological questions, as they may have taken it for granted that they were.

I fear it is but too obvious, with respect to many of the numbers who were 'irrecoverably' driven from the Lock, when my father proceeded to unfold and apply the parts of St. Paul's writings which treat of 'Christian tempers and relative duties,' that their real objection was not to Arminianism, (of which they very probably scarcely knew the meaning,) but to *half, or more than half, the word of God*. They had been accustomed to overlook it themselves, and could not bear to have it pressed upon their notice by another.

My father continues: I had at this time many instructors as to my style of preaching; and some at the Lock board assumed rather a high tone of authority: while others were disposed to counsel me as the messengers of Ahab did Michaiah.\* But I disposed of the dictating instruction very shortly. 'Gentlemen,' I said, 'you possess authority sufficient to change me *for* another preacher, whenever you please; but you have no power to change me *into* another preacher. If you do not convince my understanding that I am in an error, you can never induce me to alter my method of preaching.'

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HYMN.

Faint not, poor traveller, though thy way  
Be rough, like that thy Saviour trod;  
Though cold and stormy lower the day;  
This path of suffering leads to God.

Nay, sink not; though from every limb,  
Are starting drops of toil and pain;  
Thou dost but share the lot of him,  
With whom his followers are to reign.

Thy friends are gone, and thou, alone,  
Must bear the sorrows that assail;  
Look upward to the eternal throne,  
And know a friend who cannot fail.

Bear firmly; yet a few more days,  
And thy hard trial will be past;  
Then wrapt in glory's opening blaze,  
Thy feet will rest on heaven at last.

Christian! thy friend, thy master prayed,  
While dread and anguish shook his frame;  
Then met his sufferings undismayed;  
Wilt thou not strive to do the same?

Oh, think'st thou that his Father's love  
Shone round him then with fainter rays,  
Than now, when throned all height above,  
Unceasing voices hymn his praise?

Go, sufferer, calmly meet the woes,  
Which God's own mercy bids thee bear,  
Then, rising as thy Saviour rose,  
Go, his eternal victory share.

\* 1 Kings xxii. 13, 14.



## REVIEW.

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### ARTICLE XIII.

*A Catechism, in three parts. Part first, containing the elements of religion and morality ; designed for children. Part second, consisting of questions and answers, chiefly historical, on the Old Testament. Part third, consisting of similar questions and answers on the New Testament, designed for children and young persons. Compiled and recommended by the Ministers of the Worcester Association in Massachusetts. Cambridge.*

*An Introductory Catechism, by Dr. Carpenter ; and also, a Catechism of Scripture names, by Dr. Watts ; to which are added, Prayers and Hymns for children. Baltimore.*

THE first named of these little books is compiled and recommended by the Worcester Association of Ministers, who deserve praise for their repeated attention to this important subject. They several years ago published a catechism for the benefit of the children in their several parishes, which being now out of print, they have attempted to improve upon it in the present publication, and have sent abroad what we conceive to be a very valuable work of the kind. It is in part a compilation, and in part original. Many questions and answers are extracted from the little manual for small children entitled 'Elements of Religion and Morality,' which has been for many years extensively used and highly valued. The catechisms of Watts also, which have been freely drawn from by all who have made similar compilations since that good man lived ; and of Priestley, who laboured alike for philosophers and for children, have been in some instances consulted. The result is a judicious and useful book, which may be introduced with advantage to schools and families.

It is divided into three parts. The first part contains the simplest principles of moral and religious knowledge, and the most important precepts of religious obedience, in language perfectly adapted to the comprehension of children. Amongst these we were particularly gratified to find some of our Saviour's prominent instructions introduced in the very words of scripture. We were also pleased with the answer to the 50th question, as introducing to the notice of children the early obligation of the

Lord's Supper, the consideration of which is too apt to be postponed as a matter with which none have any concern until they arrive at man's estate.

The second part contains questions on the Old Testament. They are principally historical, relating to those persons and events, an acquaintance with which is of most consequence in reading the sacred volume. Some are chronological, giving the date of those remarkable events or distinguishing epochs, to which the rest of the history may be referred. Some are geographical, pointing out the situation of many important places. Some relate to those circumstances in the contemporary history of other nations, to which allusions are sometimes made in the Bible. Some describe the great feasts of the Jews, about which children are apt to be told nothing, and therefore to have erroneous conceptions of some passages. It is readily perceived that all this is valuable information, which must essentially aid the intelligent reading of the Scriptures. Children are thus furnished with a sort of key, by which they will be able to unlock many difficult passages for themselves. The plan we believe to be new, so far as relates to this particular.

The third part contains questions on the New Testament, upon a similar plan with those on the old. They are confined principally to stating general principles and leading facts, the knowledge of which is necessary and sufficient to illustrate much of the gospel history, and which does not ordinarily find place in catechisms. We esteem this exceedingly judicious and useful. As examples of what we mean, we refer to Part II. qu. 54, 55. 64. 68. 69. 81. &c. and Part III. qu. 29. 33. 75. 76. 77. (together with the note, which perhaps might well have made part of the answer,) 93, &c.

The other work, whose title we have given above, is the republication of *Catechisms* by Drs. Carpenter and Watts. That of the former is designed for the youngest class of learners, for whose use it is excellently suited. Its great peculiarity is a greater fulness on the character and offices of Jesus Christ than is usual in works of this sort. That of the latter is a catechism of names and places in the Old and New Testaments, conveying useful information in a concise and easy form.

We recommend both these publications to the attention of parents and teachers. Some may probably find the one, and some the other, best adapted to their design or suited to their taste. But there need be no interference between them. Both may be advantageously used in the instruction of the same children. Teachers of schools, and ministers in parochial instruction, may give them to different classes of their pupils,



and will probably find the interest of the children in their work kept alive and increased by a change from the one to the other. One catechism is soon learned, the answers become familiar, and when they have been repeated every sabbath for a year, they cease to excite the attention they once did. A change is for this reason desirable. And not less so for the sake of the teacher, who equally with the pupil needs to have his attention sometimes excited by change.

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ARTICLE XIV.

*Sermons on the Unity of God, and on the Character of Jesus Christ.*

By WINTHROP BAILEY, A.M. Minister of the Gospel in Pelham, Mass. Springfield. A. G. Tannatt & Co. 1822. pp. 68.

'THE unity of God,' is a doctrine, not only most agreeable to reason and philosophy, but expressly taught by divine revelation. It was received by the Jews, who had the books of the Old Testament, and it is received by Christians, who have the books both of the Old and New Testament. Christians of all sects and names profess to believe, that there is only one God. This doctrine makes the first article in the creed of all who admit the inspiration of the Bible, and embrace the christian theology. And their faith is confirmed by the consideration, that the exercise of their rational powers, and the knowledge of events in the physical creation, conduct to the same conclusion. That there can be but one First cause, is the voice alike of nature, of reason, and of revelation.

Whence is it, then, that there are advocates, zealous and intolerant advocates, for a creed, which militates with this most plain and evident truth, essential both to true religion and true philosophy? What is the purport of this creed, and how is it supported?

The time has been, when the mysteriousness of a doctrine was rather urged in its favour, than as an objection. But at the present period, men of inquisitive minds and philosophical research will not avail themselves of such a subterfuge. Neither the Athanasian or Nicene creed is now received, merely because it is mysterious and apparently contradictory. But resort is had to reason and scripture for proof of the doctrine. The learned Trinitarians of modern times refer to certain passages of scripture, and advance their 'strong reasons,' drawn from their interpretation of those passages, with a view to convince thinking

and intelligent men of the truth of this theological tenet. And yet we venture to assert, that had not the doctrine been handed down from the dark ages of former times, and surrounded with much to awe the ignorant, and give its advocates a character for superior wisdom and sanctity, no man of the present age would dare to advance it, or pretend to support it from either reason or scripture. Were the article, now, for the first time, to be framed and offered to Christians, for their credence, we are satisfied it could find as few believers, as the peculiar and most mysterious doctrines of Swedenborg, or the Romish dogma of transubstantiation. It is chiefly to its antiquity and the venerable names with which it has been associated, that we are to attribute its present reception and popularity. But with learned and intelligent men, this should be no apology.

It is well known to theologians, that the doctrines of christianity became greatly obscured and corrupted in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries; and so continued till the time of the reformation and the revival of letters in the fifteenth century. It is not necessary here to relate all the causes and occasions of this corruption. It is admitted, that, after the immediate disciples and converts of the first apostles of our Lord, all miracles and inspiration ceased. The writings of Christian apologists and commentators, after this, though some of them learned and pious, exhibit lamentable specimens of false reasoning and visionary opinions. The doctrines of the Platonic school, which admitted a variety of beings superior to man, but inferior to the Great First Cause, were received by christian divines; and, mixed with the declarations of the gospel, formed a system (if system it may be called) of mystery, jargon and absurdity. The Athanasian creed is in full proof of it. And we cannot but express our astonishment and regret, that any one, who has gone much to the holy scriptures for gaining knowledge and regulating his faith, should ever listen with approbation to the absurdities and contradictions of that popular and orthodox formulary.

On this subject, there are even now but comparatively few who allow themselves to think and inquire with freedom. And there is a readiness often discovered to avail of the natural disposition of the ignorant to adopt a creed involving the greatest mysteries. We do not say this by way of reproach to the sincere and pious. It is difficult to deviate from creeds early embraced and long held sacred. Nor would we hastily condemn those who differ from us in our views on this point of faith. There is a mystery respecting the nature and essence of the Deity, which justly inspires with religious awe and baffles our deepest researches. And a doctrine is not to be discarded,



or hastily pronounced erroneous and absurd, merely because it is incomprehensible. Yet when a proposition is offered to our understanding, (and it must be offered to our understanding, if we are required to believe it,) if it be plainly absurd and contradictory in its very terms, we cannot assent to it: And he who declares an assent to it, is less entitled to the claim of either reason or piety, than he who hesitates, and expresses his doubts.

Setting aside the antiquity of the dogma, which is really nothing in its favour, and admitting its contrariety to reason, and to scripture in its most plain and express declarations; what, indeed, is there left for its support? It is this, and only this—we say it most seriously and candidly—that there are some passages in the Bible, which *seem to imply* the doctrine of the Trinity. The Spirit of God, or the Holy Spirit, *seems* sometimes to be spoken of as a being distinct from God. And Christ has powers and attributes ascribed to him, and is described, in some parts of the Bible, as so connected with the Deity, that, it is said, we are justified in considering him perfectly equal to the supreme God. And yet being a separate intelligence, we are warranted in saying there are three persons in the divine nature; or three gods, and yet but one God.\*

Now a doctrine so contrary to, as well as above reason, should be expressly and clearly revealed; otherwise we cannot be required to receive it: whereas it is only matter of construction and reasoning from certain declarations, or interpretations of a few passages of scripture, confessedly difficult and figurative. And the Unitarians contend, that, as the divine Unity is clearly and fully taught, it is the part of reason, and is due to truth to inquire, whether these difficult, obscure and figurative expressions do not admit of a different explanation, and altogether consistent with the doctrine so emphatically inculcated, of *one* God. If it were possible for a man to be impartial in judging in a cause when he himself is a party, we should not fear to appeal to the candid and intelligent Trinitarian, for a decision in our favour.

The texts of scripture, which are supposed to teach the doctrine of the Trinity, are very few. We think it may be said, that there are none (which are admitted to be genuine) which directly or plainly assert it. And keeping in mind the considerations above suggested, of the explicit declarations, that '*God is one*,' and of the figurative expressions relating to Christ, on account of his divine commission and miraculous character;

\* A mere *modal* distinction does not satisfy the advocates of a Trinity; nor does their language imply this only.

these passages, most relied on by Trinitarians, will be found to afford feeble support to the article : too feeble, indeed, to shake our belief in the *fundamental* truth of the strict *unity* of the supreme Deity.

So little stress is now laid by those even who contend for the co-equality of Christ with God, upon the ancient doctrine of the separate and distinct existence of the Holy Spirit, that it is not necessary to dwell on this point. It seems to be generally conceded, that the texts of scripture, which mention the divine spirit and the spirit of God, intend only the intelligence or energy of the Deity himself. And the supposition is perfectly consistent with the popular language, in which the Bible was written.

Whether we examine the Septuagint version, or consider the Hebrew idiom, the celebrated passage in the IX chap. of Isaiah, must be acknowledged by the candid and impartial critic to give no support to the Athanasian creed. It simply implies, that Christ, or the Messiah who was promised, would be endowed with great miraculous powers and have extraordinary knowledge of the will and purposes of Jehovah ; that he would be the constituted Head of a new pacific and holy dispensation, to which the world would be subjected, and by which it would be sanctified and governed. He was to be the leading and chief Agent in this great moral creation ; and the doctrines he was to teach to effect it, were to be divine and heavenly. So when it is said, ' his name shall be called Immanuel, or God with us,' the true and only meaning is, that the power and wisdom of God would be singularly manifested by him. In this sense, the Jews understood it. For when our Lord performed miracles among them, they said, ' truly a great prophet is risen up among us, and *God has visited his people.*' When our Lord says, ' He who hath seen me hath seen the Father ; I and the Father are one ; The Father dwelleth in me and I in him,' &c. ; there is no difficulty in explaining these passages in perfect agreement with the entire unity of the Deity. It is evident from the connexion, from other similar texts, and from attending to the manner, in which he speaks of his own and the Father's connexion with the disciples, that the language is highly figurative ; and is intended only to suggest the special and extraordinary communications of divine wisdom and power to himself and to the apostles, for the great purposes of teaching and establishing a new religion in the world ; and the divine favour and support to be vouchsafed to the sincere and faithful followers of the Messiah. It is only to read these passages with an unprejudiced mind, to perceive that they do not at all teach the co-equality of Christ



with the Supreme Deity. For in all these places, it is expressly stated, that he was appointed, ordained, sent, empowered, and supported by God. And the recollection of his miraculous character and his high prophetic powers will fully justify the phraseology used by the Apostle; especially when we consider the figurative style of the oriental writers.

The introductory verses of St. John's Gospel, which some consider a very difficult passage, when compared with other parts of his gospel, and reference is had to the peculiar style of this Apostle, we think do not militate with the doctrine of the divine unity, so expressly taught in other parts of the evangelical writings; nor represent Christ as an independent, co-equal God. Some, indeed, contend that they represent Christ to have existed before all time, and to have created the visible universe. But on close examination, the more rational and consistent interpretation is, that the divine intelligence or wisdom, by which the worlds were made, and which is the underived source of all light and power, and being, (and therefore with God and God himself) having been disregarded, or unperceived and unacknowledged, amidst prevailing darkness and error, one was ordained and commissioned to be the Messiah, or Christ and anointed of God, to enlighten, to reform and save mankind. That divine spirit, which illuminated the prophets of old, and which, indeed, gives a degree of wisdom and understanding to all intelligent beings, qualified Jesus of Nazareth for the high and holy office of a spiritual teacher and guide and head to an erring, ignorant world.\* He had greater degrees of knowledge as to the divine purposes and will than any other prophet. He had 'the spirit of God without measure.'

Thus qualified and thus assisted, he was a light to enlighten the moral world; the Son, Image, Agent, and Messenger of the Most High. Never did so much divine intelligence dwell in flesh, or in a human form before. And as he was willing to forego his own glory; to devote himself wholly to the cause, for which God had highly endowed him, to labour and suffer for others, he is therefore justly, though figuratively, called 'the Lamb of God;' our ransom, our redeemer. He came to turn us, and thus to save us from our sins; and by believing and following him we shall have eternal life. And had he, indeed, shrunk from his destined work, had he not lived and taught and suffered, as he did, (if one might make the supposition) the world would not have been blest by his perfect example and heavenly

\* See Luke i. 35.—ii. 30, 31.—xxiv. 19. John i. 17, 18. Acts ii. 22,—iii. 13—15, and —iv. 10.—v. 30, 31.—x. 38.

doctrine ; nor supported by the hope of immortality, resting on his resurrection : all would have been moral darkness still. But he was faithful to him who appointed him ; he endured temptations ; he performed the whole of his heavenly commission ; he revealed the grace of God ; he exhibited the power of religion in his own conduct ; he submitted to death as necessary to the fulfilment of the divine purposes ; he was obedient in all things to the will of God ; and thus became perfect through sufferings. He is, therefore, exalted to the right hand of the Eternal ; and is made Head of the church, or first and chief among the saints or children of God ; who, through his faithful agency and the influence of his heavenly doctrines, are to be made partakers of immortality.

It is only to consider our Saviour in this high and holy character, to consider him as faithfully fulfilling this important and divine work of a messenger from God, to enlighten and reform mankind ; and all the epithets applied to him in the New Testament will appear perfectly just and consistent, without the strange and revolting interpretation, which the Trinitarians adopt. As he was amply qualified by the Deity to instruct and save the world, it was most proper to speak of him as the Messenger and Son of God ; as 'the Captain of our Salvation,' 'the resurrection and the life : ' as 'having power *given* him to bestow eternal life' on the obedient and pious ; as 'judge of the world,' as 'having all authority in heaven and earth,' &c.

We will only add, that the passage in 1 John, v. 7, is acknowledged to be an interpolation by all candid and learned Trinitarians ; that, in Acts, xx. 28, it should be Lord or Christ, and not God ; and that the texts, 1 Tim. iii. 16 ; Heb. i. 8 ; 1 John v. 20, and Rev. i. 11 and 17, are not, all of them, as they now appear in our Testaments, agreeable to the most ancient and correct versions ; and that some fairly admit of translations, which afford no support to the doctrine of the perfect equality of Christ with the Supreme Deity.

But upon all these points we have written more fully in other places, and do not now intend to enlarge. We rather refer our readers to Mr. Bailey, the author of the sermons mentioned at the head of this article. He is a decided and able advocate for the doctrine of the divine unity. We do not, indeed, perceive any arguments entirely new, or more convincing than have been urged by other writers. But it is apparent, he has thought much on the subject ; that he has read the Bible with attention, for the purpose of forming his opinions consistently with its inspired declarations ; and that he is most sincere and impartial in his present convictions. He refers to the opposition of the



doctrine to our reason and understanding ; but dwells chiefly on those passages of scripture which are supposed to relate to the subject. He insists on the express declarations in the Bible, that *God is one* ; and that Christ was sent, commissioned and qualified by God for the great work of salvation : and that however highly our Lord is represented and whatever epithets are applied to him, they must all be taken and construed in accordance with other plain texts of scripture, which teach the unity of the Deity. The passages quoted by Trinitarians, are mentioned, and the criticisms and remarks accompanying, are correct and discriminating. But, above all, there is a most excellent spirit discovered in the whole discussion, which we recommend to all who engage in theological controversy. Why is it, we ask with surprise and regret, that among men who profess to be disciples of the blessed Jesus, and who are contending, not for triumph, but for truth, not for speculative tenets, but for 'doctrines according to godliness ;' there appears so much ill will, uncharitableness and bitter reproaches ? Alas, we fear, 'they know not what spirit they are of.' A humble and devout spirit, after all our researches and inquiries, will teach us charity, and will prevent our anathematizing others who are faithful in their investigations and true to their own convictions. We cannot, indeed, conceive that real christians will 'bite and devour one another.'

We are the more gratified with the views and reasonings of Mr. Bailey, because they are those of a man who has seen and felt all the difficulties with which the subject is encompassed, on the one side as well as on the other. He has been perfectly acquainted with the strong holds of orthodoxy, in which for years he dwelt. He knows the full weight of the arguments on which he once rested, and therefore can the better appreciate those which oppose them. The evidence which has satisfied ourselves, seems to acquire double value, when we find that it has proved sufficient also to satisfy one, who had been accustomed to regard it as light and weak. Mr. Bailey was formerly a decided Trinitarian. But from recent examination of the New Testament and serious reflexions on its declarations, he has become convinced that the doctrine is not taught in the inspired volume : That it is an article framed by fallible men ; resting wholly, (so far as scripture is concerned) on forced and unauthorized constructions of a very few texts. The honesty, explicitness, and strength and clearness of reasoning, with which he has declared his convictions to the world, instead of persecution and reproach, merit commendation and praise.

We recommend these sermons to serious and inquiring christians, who are desirous of having their opinions rest upon the

foundation of the apostles and prophets ; and who would have their faith stand, not in the pretended wisdom of fallible men, but in the plain declarations and instructions of the gospel, which is 'the power of God.' They will find all the main points of scriptural evidence, adduced with great clearness and conciseness, leaving every argument in its naked force, unencumbered by needless words, circumlocution, or repetition. We do not know that they would be likely to meet elsewhere an equally extensive view of the subject comprized within so small a compass, and set forth in so satisfactory a manner. The Sermons are six in number, with the following titles :

Sermon I. The Father alone to be worshipped, as the True God.

Sermon II. Christ and the Father, two distinct beings.

Sermon III. The names, titles, and works of Christ, considered.

Sermon IV. Christ does not possess the peculiar attributes of God.

Sermon V. Christ is not to be worshipped as God.

Sermon VI. Christ possesses only one Intellectual Nature.

We spare ourselves any analysis of the contents, and present but one specimen of the book.

'The circumstance that both are mentioned in the same connexion, is no evidence that both are equally worshipped. This is confirmed by the following examples. "And all the congregation blessed the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down their heads, and worshipped the Lord and the king." (I. Chron. xxix. 20.) Here Jehovah and David are connected as objects of worship, in the same way, as God and the Lamb are connected in the passages under consideration. Had these words been found in the New Testament, with the name *Christ* instead of *the king*, it is needless to say, how they would be applied by Trinitarians.—We should have been told of the inconsistency, nay the idolatry, of uniting a creature with the Creator, in the same act of worship. The passage now shows, how we are to estimate this kind of argument. It proceeds on a wrong supposition ; viz. that both of the persons, mentioned, must be equally objects of worship. When the congregation worshipped Jehovah and David, they doubtless worshipped each according to his character ; the first, as God, the second, as king of Israel. Both were worthy of honour ; but in unequal degrees. So, when blessing, honour, &c. are ascribed to *him that sitteth on the throne*, and to *the Lamb* ; the nature of the case, and the description, given of the two, show, as in the other instance, that only one of them is worshipped as the supreme God. The language here no more proves the Lamb to be equal, or equally worshipped, with him, who sitteth on the throne ; than, in the other case, it proves David to



be equal, or equally worshipped, with the Lord. Our Saviour said, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in *his own* glory, and in *his Father's*, and of the *holy angels*." (Luke ix. 26.) Had the last clause been ;—"when he shall come in his own glory and of the Father, and of the holy Spirit;"—we should probably have been told, that the glory of the three is the same, and therefore that the three must be equal; and, further, that it is inconsistent to mention the glory of a creature in connexion with that of the supreme God. The passage however entirely refutes this mode of reasoning; and shows, from the very best authority, that the glory of creatures may be mentioned in the same connexion with that of the Creator, without any design of representing them to be equal. St. Paul said, (1. Tim. v. 21.) "I charge thee before *God*, and the *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the *elect angels*." Had this passage been read;—"I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the holy Spirit;" it would doubtless have been regarded as a proof of the Trinity; on the ground, that in the most solemn charge, which can be given to man, a created being could not consistently be united with the supreme God. Perhaps it would have been considered an act of worship to the three persons in the divine nature; and as an instance of the equal glory, which they receive. Of "him that overcometh," Christ said, "I will write upon him the name of my *God*, and the name of the *city* of my God, and *my* new name." (Rev. iii. 12.) Though this is never thought to prove the supreme divinity of "him that overcometh;" yet, the angel, who is supposed to be Christ, is thought by many to possess essential deity, because God said "My name is in him." (Ex. xxiii. 21.) Why is an inference drawn in the latter case, which, as every one knows, cannot be drawn in the other?—pp. 57—59.

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ARTICLE XV.

*The History of the Church of Christ.* By JOSEPH MILNER, M.A. 5 vols. 8vo. Boston. 1809. 12mo. 1822.

WE rank ourselves with those who believe that the world is gradually growing wiser; in religion as in every other department of knowledge. And yet on this supposition, we can hardly account for the singularly vicious taste of the public evinced by the sort of books that are growing into popularity. Why is it that the solid and deep-toned, though in some respects erroneous, devotional works of Taylor and Baxter and Watts, are every where giving place to the flimsy sentimental trash continually teeming from our presses, in the shape of Diaries

and Experiences? Why is it that the sensible and learned Expositions of scripture by Whitby and Doddridge, are likely to be intirely supplanted by the cumbersome volumes of Scott, whose wearisome 'Notes and Observations,' are not only read and endured, but praised and held as almost oracular? These surely are signs which would seem to indicate a retrograde movement of the human mind; so far at least as religion is concerned. It certainly must prove some such movement that another edition of Milner's Church History is demanded; an author remarkable for nothing more than for the dull and heavy manner in which he retails his dull and heavy matter. Our surprise that there should be a demand for a new edition of this book is the greater, because the same subject has been so often treated by other and abler hands; by men holding the same theological opinions with Milner, and yet in every respect superior to him as ecclesiastical historians;—not only more learned, consistent and impartial, but also more dignified, more interesting, and even more powerful as the advocates of their party, and certainly more respectable as its representatives.\*

The very principle on which Milner proceeds in writing his history, and which he boasts of so much as his 'new plan,' is liable we conceive to very strong objections. He thinks that 'in every age there have been *real* followers of Christ' who have constituted his church, and that 'to illustrate the character of these men, and point out some of the effects of the Holy Spirit upon them,' is the true and proper object of the ecclesiastical historian. Under these impressions he gives us what he is pleased to call, 'a history of the out-pourings of the Divine Spirit;' without paying much attention to the secularities of the church, to its forms and customs in different ages, to the causes of its errors and dissensions, nor even to chronology or the connexion of the narrative. Now we do not deny that such a work, executed with judgment and in a good spirit, presenting in

\* It is objected to Mosheim, and perhaps with some degree of justice, that he is too voluminous a writer and too erudite, as well as too much employed upon civil affairs, and upon the schisms and corruptions of the church, rather than upon the church itself, for general reading. But there are other works against which none of these exceptions can be taken, in particular the following — 'The History of the Christian church from the Birth of Christ to the Eighteenth century: including the very interesting account of the Waldenses and Albegenses. By William Jones. 2 vols. 8vo. 4th Edition. London: 1819.' Here is a work respectable in every point of view, embracing the same period and written upon nearly the same plan with Milner's, coming too from an orthodox man and designed expressly for popular reading; and yet this book has been allowed to reach a fourth edition in England without having been reprinted in this country.



a connected series the lives and pious meditations of all the best men that have lived under the christian dispensation, would answer many useful purposes, and would be on the whole a very good book. But it certainly would not be a good history of the church in any proper sense of that word, since from the very principle of its construction, it would be materially deficient in the information which such a work is expected to give. Milner gravely tells us in his Introduction, that 'an history of the perversions and abuses of religion is not properly an history of the church; as absurd would it be to suppose an history of the highwaymen that have infested this country, to be an history of England;' and indeed we might give this as a specimen of our author's profound and discriminating observations. It is true we do not expect to find in the history of any country, a history of its robbers and beggars. But what would Milner have said to a history of England, in which the reigns of Edward the Third, and Henry the Eighth, were entirely omitted or slightly touched upon, because forsooth they were bad men and trampled on the laws. Besides, a work composed upon this plan, however well executed, could answer but very imperfectly the *moral* purposes of an ecclesiastical history. The office of an ecclesiastical historian is not to give us merely a dry chronicle of facts, nor yet to fatigue us to death, by a tedious recital of the religious experiences of honest well-meaning men. His object is, or at least it ought to be, to teach us human nature, as it is affected by religious truth and religious error; to point out the thousand forms which faith and piety and religious zeal have assumed; to show the mutual influence which church and state, religion and learning, have had on one another; to convince us that there have been good men and bad men of all persuasions, and in all religious connexions; above all to demonstrate the absolute futility of all arguments in favour of a disputed doctrine, drawn from its antiquity, its general reception or the authority of distinguished names; and in fine, to make us truly and thoroughly *liberal* with respect to all sectarian differences, in the same sense and in the same way, that travel and an extensive acquaintance with the world, make men liberal as to all local prejudices. These are the proper objects of ecclesiastical history; but it is plain that none of them can be compassed on Milner's 'new plan.' We admit that some writers have dwelt too exclusively on the errors and corruptions of the church, and in a tone too of sarcasm, or levity, or heartlessness, which we altogether disapprove; and the tendency of which upon common readers, must be to produce a deep and inveterate scepticism. Among such writers we must class Gibbon, Middleton, and

Robinson, amusing and instructive as we consider them in other respects. Still we cannot but think that truth is often as much advanced by a judicious exposure of error, and piety by the unmasking of hypocrisy, as by any other means. And though we must regret that men calling themselves Christians, and the *only* Christians, should ever have resorted to arts and practices that have brought dishonour upon the Christian name, yet as such has been the fact, it may be well for the public to be apprised of it, as it may do something to prevent a recurrence of similar impositions.

We have said more perhaps than was necessary upon our author's plan, as he does not scruple to depart from it himself whenever it suits his purpose. It is against the manner and spirit with which he has executed his plan that we would be understood principally to protest. Indeed he seems to have thought of his plan merely because it affords him a fairer pretext for saying nothing but what is good of the orthodox, whom he chooses to consider as *the church*, and nothing but what is bad of the heretics, whom he chooses to consider as the adversaries of the church. What really distinguishes the work before us from all others of the kind is that it is an avowed attempt to make it appear that there has been no piety, no humility, no real virtue out of the orthodox communion.

'Yet I shall beg leave,' says the author, 'to insist on the necessity of our understanding certain fundamental principles, as necessary to constitute the real gospel. The divinity of Christ, the atonement, justification by faith, regeneration—we have seen these to be the principles of the primitive church, and within this inclosure the *whole* of that piety which produced such glorious effects has been confined, and it is worthy the attention of learned men to consider whether the same remark may not be made in *all ages*.' I. 142.

Speaking of the modern Unitarians he asks, 'Are these the Christians of the three first centuries? Were they such men as these whom Celsus scorned? No surely. If they were, their worldly ambitious spirit might easily have found some of the many pretenders to the Roman empire with whom they might have united. We should have seen Christians active in politics, bargaining with different competitors for the empire, and insisting on some communication of temporal powers and privileges to themselves. Men so void of heavenly ambition would have displayed that which is of the earth; and had Ebion's religious sentiments been then as prevalent as now, the humble, meek, charitable, passive, Christians would not have adorned the historic page; but the turbulent, aspiring, political sons of Arius and So-



tinus would have been the predominant characters of the foregoing narrative.' I. 506.

'However melancholy may have been the scenes of human wickedness, which we have reviewed, and however faint the marks of godliness in any person, still real virtue was seen the attendant of orthodox sentiments *alone*.' II. 167.

'I love to lay open to the reader all along the connexion between principle and practice,' says Milner, while he is lauding the praises of SAINT Austin, the father of modern orthodoxy—'and if I show not the indisputable superiority of the orthodox Christians, in disposition and temper, I miss one of the most important points which I have in view through the whole history.' II. 371.

We see therefore that the real object of this book is not to give a history of the church, properly so called, nor to promote the interests of piety and practical Christianity—but to aid the views of a party; and to this object every other consideration is made to yield. What degree of historical fairness and fidelity can be expected from an author writing for such a purpose, and under such influences, we might leave it for the public to judge. A man must be expected, under any circumstances, to feel and show some degree of partiality for those who have held and defended his own sentiments. In estimating the comparative virtue and intelligence of these men and their opponents, he will, however, if a candid writer, make allowances for this partiality, and guard against this very natural bias, as he would guard against any other temptation, that might lead him into error. When, therefore, a writer comes forward, like Milner, who, instead of a mere pardonable and guarded leaning in favour of his own party, arrogates to them *all* the piety, and *all* the humility, and *all* the virtue—when, too, in contempt even of the appearance of candour, he has the effrontery to avow this in the very outset, and in so many words to declare that he shall '*miss one of his most important points*' in writing, if he does not confirm and propagate this prejudice—what man in his senses would put any confidence in the representations of such a writer?

The foregoing remarks are applicable to any historian, but particularly to the ecclesiastical historian from the peculiar nature of his subject and the materials. No distinguished partizan in the church, whether orthodox or heretical, ever lived in the times to which Milner's history relates, who has not had two opposite and irreconcilable characters given him by his contemporaries—one by his friends, the other by his enemies. The historian, therefore, who is so disposed, may adopt one of these representations throughout, and reject the other altogether, and

the man stands before him—a saint or a devil, just which he pleases. Our author, as might be expected, has followed this course in all cases; for we doubt whether a single instance can be adduced, in which he has set aside, or even qualified, the statements of orthodox writers by the equally respectable testimonies of cotemporary heretics. In this way he finds no difficulty in giving the utmost license to his partialities, without going counter to his documents; for his partiality discovers itself, not in wresting his documents, but in selecting them. Besides, another circumstance should be considered in this connexion, for which, however, Milner makes no allowance—that while the orthodox authorities have been carefully preserved to us, the works of the early heretics have for the most part been suppressed and destroyed; especially those which contained their own vindication, or exposed the vices and follies of their persecutors. We see, therefore, how easy it was for our author, notwithstanding all his parade of documents, and his pretending to derive his statements from cotemporary authorities, to give a history to all intents and purposes as partial, and we had almost said as fabulous, as if it had been throughout of his own invention.

Not, however, that Milner thinks any sort of testimony to be necessary in many cases to establish his points. The very circumstance that a man was orthodox, is to him proof sufficient that he was a good man; and, on the other hand, the single fact that a man was heterodox, is proof sufficient that he was a bad man; and he sets them down accordingly. ‘One circumstance,’ he observes, ‘which convinces me that genuine godliness, the offspring of Christian principles, *must have been* with the primitive monks, is because they generally vindicated the Nicene faith and could not endure Arianism.’ (II. 106.) And again he says, (II. 209.) ‘a man ought no more to plead the pretences of conscience for rejecting the fundamentals of the gospel, [before enumerated] than for the commission of murder, theft, or any other criminal action’—thus making a rejection of orthodoxy to imply, not merely an error in judgment, but a destitution of moral principle. Such a man may indeed be said to write an ecclesiastical history upon a ‘*new plan*.’ We do not complain of a man’s attachment to his principles, nor of his believing in their superior efficacy, nor of his gratitude and respect for those, who, in former times, have defended and illustrated them. All this is natural, and we presume universal; at least we know that such are our own feelings and convictions: but we hope never to suffer them to pervert our moral judgments. We can have no patience with a man like Milner, who deliberately sets himself to the task of glossing over the gross ignorance and palpable



superstitions of the orthodox Fathers, merely because they were orthodox; denying or excusing or vindicating their bigotry and intolerance;\* palliating and even justifying their persecuting spirit; except indeed when it proceeded to put heretics actually to death, which he acknowledges is carrying a wholesome discipline a little too far. Mark however the guarded and tender expressions in which he rebukes them for shedding human blood. 'I scarce know any thing,' he remarks 'more disagreeable to the spirit of a really good man, than to think of punishing CAPITALLY, persons whom he is constrained to believe, are walking the broad road to eternal destruction.' (II. 189.)

As for the early heretics, we have no interest in defending them from the aspersions cast upon them by Milner and others. It is probable they shared with the orthodox, the virtues and vices prevalent in their age; and perhaps equally, except that the persecuted are generally better men than their persecutors; partly because they have not the power and opportunity to do so much wrong, and partly because the very oppressions which they endure have a tendency to imbue them with better feelings. It is certain, however, that they have been greatly misrepresented. To borrow the language of the calm and judicious Lardner; 'some seem to have reckoned that they have a right to say the worst things of heretics, which they could; and others have thought themselves obliged to believe all the evil that has been reported of them.' 'It is improbable,' continues the same writer, 'that these men should have exceeded all others in vice. Neither can it be to the honour of Christians or their religion to multiply sects or divisions among them, or to aggravate and multiply their faults. In all bodies that are numerous, there will be some lewd and profligate persons; but that whole sects and parties should practise and teach wickedness, is very unlikely, and ought to be well attested before it is believed.† Our

\* See on this subject Chap. XVII. Cent. IV. on 'Ecclesiastical Establishments;' which contains a wretched attempt to vindicate the interposition of the civil arm to punish heresy. From such a writer we might expect such a remark as the following: 'But without an *establishment provided by the state*, the greater part will scarce have any religion at all; wickedness will be practised on the boldest scale; and if the form of government have a large portion of liberty in its texture, the manners will be egregiously dissolute.' (II. 222) Our own country, thank God, is 'without an establishment provided by the state,' and our government also has 'a large portion of liberty in its texture;' but have the consequences been as stated above? Is it possible that our citizens, that congregationalists, that the descendants of the Pilgrims, can wish to have such slavish maxims disseminated?

† Lardner's Hist. of Heretics, Sect. viii. We cannot refrain from giving in this place the character which Milner is pleased to award to Dr. Lard-

author, however, gives no quarter to the heretics, as might be expected, for indeed he would 'miss one of his principal points' in writing if he did. He denominates, and what is more, he treats them as 'the instruments of satan;' he even attempts to fix on them those charges which Celsus and Porphyry brought against the christians generally; making them as it were the scape-goats of the church; he denies to them indiscriminately the possession of any *real* goodness whatever, in accordance to the assumption on which his whole book proceeds; whatever virtue they may *appear* to possess he ascribes to 'a spurious decency and gravity of manners;' and if they appeal to their martyrs to testify to their sincerity and constancy, he is ready to exclaim in the words of Augustine to the Donatists, 'Martyrs! martyrs to the devil! They were not martyrs; it is the cause, not the suffering, that makes a martyr. There is no such thing as a martyr *out of the church.*'

It is one of the main designs of this history, to show practically, what true christians were both in principles and manners; with how much historical fidelity and impartiality, we have already seen. Throughout the whole the writer very much overrates the influence which religious belief of any kind, has in forming the character. Men act not so much from their belief, as from their habits, and these again are not formed so much by their belief, as by education, example, public sentiment and the peculiar circumstances in which they are placed. As to what really constitutes the christian character, Milner is, as we conceive, greatly mistaken; though of course, from the peculiar nature of his undertaking, it was more necessary that he should be enlightened on this point, than upon any other. His conceptions of christian excellence are precisely such as might be expected from a man naturally phlegmatic, and wholly unacquainted with the world and human nature. He makes but little account of the amiable and social qualities, and as for candour and moderation, he even cautions us against them; for he speaks of 'a sceptical carelessness and indifference, not unlike that temper, which, under the names of candour and moderation, has now overspread the face of Europe.' The hermits, and monks, and martyrs, are the christians of Milner's choice, and he takes every opportunity to eulogize their piety and self devotion, not apparently considering how little there was of real christian feeling that led to, or attended their sacrifices. He is

ner. 'In an affair merely historical, I know none whose judgment and industry deserve more regard. But he is an enemy to the vital doctrines of the gospel, though as candid an one as *his principles would admit.* (I. 141.)



forever complaining of modern degeneracy, and of the amusements and fashions, and refinements of the present day; as if christian virtue were not, on the whole, better understood and better practised too by christians, at the present time, than in the dark ages, or even in the first centuries. Next to heresy, there is nothing for which our author entertains so much horror as for talents, learning, and philosophy. 'The cultivation itself of the human mind,' says he, 'when carried on in the best manner, is apt to be abused to the perversion of the gospel.' 'The church of Christ,' he observes in another place, 'is as abhorrent in its plan and spirit from moral philosophy, as from *debauchery*.' It is true he makes some concessions in favour of philology. 'May it not be said, that grammar, history, criticism, oratory, taught and acquired, with a proper subordination to divine grace, and regulated by common sense, are much *less* dangerous, and, in their way, more useful endowments for a minister of Christ, than philosophy of any kind, metaphysical or natural?' (l. 429.) So it seems that learning, and especially those branches of it, which are to teach us how to think and discriminate, and balance evidence, are unfavourable and dangerous to religion. Why, we do not know, unless it be that the sooner a man learns how to think and discriminate, and balance evidence, the sooner he will be likely to renounce orthodoxy; an argument which probably affected Milner's mind differently from ours. It is true learning may sometimes make men proud, but so too may ignorance, and in general, we should think it were not necessary to go to Solomon to learn, that 'a sluggard is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men who can render a reason.'

From what appears in the preceding paragraph in proof of Milner's false conceptions of the christian character, and of the manner of its formation, we perceive that the whole argument of the book falls to the ground. The object of the argument is to recommend orthodox principles, from the fact that they have always been accompanied by the christian character. But if Milner mistakes as to what constitutes the christian character, it follows that, even though more confidence were to be placed in his representations, and even though he should succeed in showing that orthodox principles have generally been accompanied by what *he considers* the christian character; still this would be no recommendation of those principles to a well informed mind. We here perceive, too, the injurious effect which this book is likely to have on its readers, in misleading them as to the true objects and purposes of religion, and in giving them false ideas as to what they must themselves be or become, in order to be real Christians. Some of the indivi-

duals whom he selects and holds up to view as models of christian excellence, were certainly men, whose examples it would be distraction to follow. We can only mention one, but one, however, who seems to have been decidedly the favourite of our author ; we mean Augustine, to whose character and writings, he has appropriated nearly one third of his second volume, and more than he has given to any other person. Now let any one consider the vagabond and profligate life which this man led previous to his conversion ; his open and shameless debaucheries, his remorseless violation of all the laws of decency and honour, of man and God ; let him consider the silly story of the miracle in his garden, too much even for Milner to believe ; his suddenly assuming an ascetic character, that he might the better accomplish his selfish and ambitious ends ; his arts to gain preferment in the church, and his tyrannical and overbearing conduct, after he had gained it ; and above all his bloody and merciless persecution of the Donatists, first driving them to desperation, and then making the excesses they committed in that desperation, the occasion of still further and more cruel persecutions ; and can he help wondering that such a man is adduced as an example of a *real* christian, and that his character is appealed to as an illustrious instance of the blessed influences of orthodox principles ?

In the controversies that are, and probably always will be in the church, we regret that the attention of the contending parties should ever be turned aside from a comparison of *principles* to a comparison of *characters*. It is not that we fear such a comparison ; for let it first be understood what christian virtue is, and we firmly believe that such a comparison would redound greatly to the honour and advantage of the unitarian cause. But we would refrain from it, because it would inevitably lead to much injustice and misrepresentation on both sides, and after all it could prove nothing, and would convince nobody. One thing more we would suggest to our orthodox friends. According to this book they possess all the humility in the world. Would it not be well for them to give some better evidence and proof of their humility, than is to be found in their arrogating to themselves all the piety and all the virtue ?

Here we might close our review, which was undertaken merely to expose the spirit and leading object of this work. Some, however, who condemn its object and spirit, may yet look to it as a work of talents—as an entertaining work, or as a work of much general information. But in truth there is nothing in the literary execution of this book to recommend it. It was written doubtless by a serious and sincere christian, though a singularly misguided one, whose views of men and things, and whose moral



judgments, were sadly affected by his theological prejudices; and who wrote for the express purpose, as he is honest enough to tell us, of promoting the interests of his party. But he is not, and he does not pretend to be, a man of much learning or research. The history is brought down no further than through the opening scenes of the Reformation, and relates therefore for the most part to times and persons with whom we can be supposed to feel but little sympathy. There is not in the whole book a single page of fine writing, or eloquent declamation, or pathetic description, none of the profound remarks of Gibbon, none of the various erudition of Mosheim, none of the amusing anecdotes of Jortin, none of the graphic sketching and grouping of Robertson; in fine, so unfortunate has been our author in the disposition and arrangement of his materials, that he fails to excite in us the interest which we feel in a sustained narrative, and his incidents and characters make but little impression on us while reading, and are soon forgotten. There may be persons who will praise this book and recommend it, for they may think they have an interest in so doing; but there cannot be many who will read it. The philosopher will throw it aside as superficial; the scholar as common-place; the general reader as dull and heavy; the devout man as cold and constrained, and the liberal christian as exclusive and disingenuous; and every one, who reads it through, and speaks his mind, will pronounce it to be a dry, barren, and unsatisfactory performance.

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## INTELLIGENCE.

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*Theological School at Cambridge.*—The annual examination of the Theological School at Cambridge was held at the University Chapel on Tuesday the 13th August. The exercises commenced at nine o'clock, and were attended by a large number of the clergy of this vicinity, as well as a number of laymen.

The following are the subjects of the Dissertations read by the members of the several classes, on this occasion:

### SENIOR CLASS.

1. An account of the formation of the received text of the New Testament, with an estimate of its authority. *J. D. Green.*
2. The character of the early Fathers as interpreters of the Scriptures. *Samuel Barret.*

3. On the gift of tongues. *G. R. Noyes.*

4. On the state of the soul immediately after death.

*Charles Robinson.*

5. On the Mosaic account of Creation.

*John Porter.*

N. B. *Mr. John Prentiss* excused on account of ill health.

#### MIDDLE CLASS.

6. On the advantages and disadvantages of a Liturgy.

*Wm. Farmer.*

7. On the design of St. John's Gospel.

*Wm. H. Furness.*

8. On the Inspiration of the New Testament. *E. S. Gannett.*

9. On the temptation of our Saviour.

*Henry Hersey.*

10. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil the law; or the connexion of the Jewish and christian covenants. *Benj. Kent.*

N. B. *Mr. Calvin Lincoln* excused on account of ill health.

#### JUNIOR CLASS.

11. Mahometanism and Christianity contrasted as they are calculated to effect the intellectual and moral character.

*E. P. Crafts.*

12. On the state of the Jews at the time of our Saviour's ministry.

*E. B. Hall.*

13. On the different opinions and sentiments entertained by the Apostles respecting our Saviour at different times. *A. Young.*

N. B. *Mr. E. W. Upham* excused on account of ill health.

Several articles of Intelligence are necessarily deferred.

#### NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A New Translation and Exposition of the Epistles of St. Paul. By Thomas Belsham 4 vols. 8vo. London.

Miscellanies selected from the Public Journals. 12mo. Boston. Published by Joseph T. Buckingham

Lectures delivered at Bowdoin College, and occasional Sermons. By Jesse Appleton, D.D. President of Bowdoin College, Brunswick. 1822.

Answer to Dr. Wood's Reply to Dr. Ware's Letters in a second series of Letters to Trinitarians and Calvinists By Henry Ware, D.D.

Letters on the Eternal generation of the Son of God; addressed to the Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D. of Princeton. By Moses Stuart, Prof. Theological Sem. Andover.

Discourses delivered in the College of New Jersey; with notes and illustrations; including a historical sketch of the College from its origin, to the accession of President Witherspoon By Ashbel Green, D.D. LL.D.

A New England Tale Second edition New York.

A Discourse before the African Society in Boston 15th of July, 1822; on the anniversary celebration of the abolition of the slave trade. By Thaddeus M. Harris, D.D. Boston

Inquiry into the relation of Cause and Effect. By Thomas Brown, M.D. F.R.S. Edin &c. Andover.

Belshazzar, a dramatic Poem. By the Rev. H. H. Milman. Boston.